



*This Book
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Thomas Hughes, Esq. Q. C.
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Presented by the Author

[Tom Brown]

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THE OLD CHURCH;

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT?



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THE OLD CHURCH;

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT?

BY

THOMAS HUGHES, Q.C.,

AUTHOR OF 'TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS.'



London:

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1878.

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1878

MAIN

TO

THE RIGHT HON. W. E. FORSTER, M.P.,

AND

TO ALL OTHER ENGLISHMEN AND WOMEN,

WHO, WHILE DISSENTING FROM THE PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF THE

NATIONAL FAITH AS EMBODIED IN THE

NATIONAL CHURCH,

ARE YET UNWILLING THAT ENGLAND SHALL, AS A NATION,

ABANDON THE MOST SACRED OF ALL THE MISSIONS

ENTRUSTED TO HER,

This Book is Dedicated,

IN ALL GOODWILL AND MUCH SYMPATHY BY

THE AUTHOR.

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THE OLD CHURCH:

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT?

I.

HOW THE QUESTION STANDS.

WHAT shall be done with the Old Church? Any one who cares has no time to lose in making up his mind what he wants, and doing what he can to get it. For some answer will have to be given in the next Parliament to this question. True, many public men have been telling us of late that it does not press ; that it is one for our children ; that at any rate it is not to be made a test question at the next election. They should change their mood into the optative. What they really mean is, that they hope it won't be made a test ; that whips, or influential persons of one kind or another, will be able to pull some other wire than this at the last moment, so that quiet folk may worry through with a silent bow to the established authorities over the right shoulder, and an aside to the Liberationists over the left—"that no one in his senses would think of establishing religion, or any-

thing else, in these days ; that they have only to be a little patient, such a settlement as will meet their views being only a question of time," and the like. A question of time no doubt it is, but were it not that we make the wish father to the thought, we should all see that that time is now.

How do I know this? Well, thus. It may not be altogether true in our politics that lookers-on see most of the game, but it certainly is true that public men on the shelf see most of one side of it, and from personal experience I can assure all doubters that in this matter they are deceiving, or trying to deceive themselves. Let them be well assured from one who has the very best reason to know, that no Liberal will contest a borough at the next election without being forced to declare himself distinctly on this subject. The time for sitting on the fence is past, and every one of us will have to jump down on one side or the other.

But I may be reminded, that in the very last year of the last Liberal Parliament, Mr. Miall moved, "That the establishment by law of the Churches of England and Scotland involves a violation of religious equality, deprives those churches of the right of self-government, imposes on Parliament duties which it is not qualified to discharge, and is hurtful to the religious and political interests of the community, and therefore ought no longer to be maintained," and was utterly defeated. No doubt that motion was negatived on the 16th of May, 1873, by the great majority of 295 ; or 356 against 61, Mr. Bright being the only member

of the then Liberal Government who voted in the minority. Almost all the other Liberal leaders voted in that majority, and so decided was the party, that Mr. Gladstone himself replied at once to Mr. Miall, and the House would listen to no one afterwards, though Sir William Harcourt made an effort to improve the occasion by showing that, in addition to the array of reasons cited by the late Premier, the Act of Settlement would become waste paper if this motion were carried.

I remember it well, and thought at the time what a mistake it was not to allow the question to be properly debated. The consequence is, that the case has never been fairly before the country within the short space over which political memory runs in these days: and the danger for us Nationalists is, that it never will be fairly before the country, unless an effort is made at once for this end. If this be done, I do not share the fears of many of my friends as to the result. I believe that there is too much common sense left in our people to commit such an act of stupidity, and that the English instinct to reform, and not to destroy, will certainly prevail in this, as it has in other departments of our national life.

But the case must be stated, or it is quite likely that judgment may go by default. For those who challenged the verdict of the last Parliament are untiring in their efforts to bring the country round to their view. They have adopted new tactics, and a new and formidable organisation is working with and for them.

I may be wrong perhaps in saying that the Liberation Society and their allies have adopted new tactics since 1873, for they have always worked as a political organisation. What I mean is, that they have never before so distinctly avowed their objects and methods. "From this time," is now the language of the society, "the question must cease to be argued from the Dissenters' standpoint." And their meaning is most clearly and authoritatively developed by Mr. R. W. Dale in his Bradford speech, which may be accepted as a pronunciamento of the highest authority. "We think," are his words, "that the time has come for making the disestablishment question part of the programme of the Liberal party ; and no time could be so favourable as this for raising the question of disestablishment to the dignity of a political question."

This, then, is the distinct policy of the Liberation Society ; and though I much question whether their thirty years of life have added much to their real strength, the experience gained has sifted out, and brought to the front, able and skilful leaders, who do not take such a step as this lightly. The coming assault, so far as the Nonconformists are concerned, may, as some people think, be that of a forlorn hope, hurried on because the leaders feel that the supports are melting away behind them, and it is their last chance. But forlorn hopes sometimes take citadels. Besides, in this case if their old supports in "the denominations" are melting away behind the Liberation Society, new and formidable recruits from the secular world are marching up. Mr. Dale may

faintly protest in favour of the older policy, and declare that, "we do not desire to win the triumph of our cause by any political stratagems," that "we are not seeking a sinister alliance with any party in the State" (speech at Derby). Possibly he, like Dr. Parker, might have preferred to go into action with those only who are moved by religious zeal. But the temptation has been too strong, and we find him and his society in league with those who mean to win by any stratagem, and, upon this question of disestablishment, propose in future "to employ all the most modern resources of scientific political warfare."* And so the united forces are fairly on the march, and the campaign has begun, which, in the words of Mr. Chamberlain, who commands the right wing at any rate if not the whole army, "will rouse a passionate discord throughout the length and breadth of the land."

Here at least we are all agreed. Passionate discord will assuredly be roused ; but we Nationalists can go into the fight with the satisfaction of feeling that we had no hand in kindling the flame. And into it we are bound to go, every man of us who does not wish to leave his country a weaker and poorer place than he found it.

I have already indicated what I meant just now by the new and formidable organisation which is working with the Liberation Society, and it is one which challenges the serious attention of all English poli-

* 'The Next Question,' by Joseph Chamberlain.

ticians. The Liberal Association of Birmingham is pretty well known, I suppose, by this time to every one who is likely to read these pages. I desire to speak of it with all respect, while I must wholly decline at present to follow the leaders of my party in holding it up as an example to all who would be good Liberals. I look upon it as a very formidable experiment, which has undoubtedly had great success in certain directions, and may fairly claim a place (to use Mr. Chamberlain's words again) amongst "the most modern resources of scientific political warfare." But it is as yet in its infancy, and has much to do before it can claim allegiance from any Liberal who really loves liberty.

In the best account* I have been able to see of it we are told that "the Liberal Association is the organisation of the people themselves for the purposes of self-government" and that "its forms permit the free play of individual convictions" around all political questions. Very good. If this should prove to be so it will in due time have my warmest support for what that is worth. I have no admiration for the "hordes of wayward free lances" in politics, which it is part of the Association's mission to crush ; though I am bound to say that I look with some misgiving on the other hand on those "armies of disciplined men well accustomed to stand side by side and move in unbroken battalions," who form, according to Mr. Crosskey, the forces at the disposal of the Liberal

* By Mr. Crosskey, *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. xxxv.

Association. Again, if at Birmingham the Liberal leaders have been able to "take the party as a whole into their direct and immediate confidence," so much the better; and if, by doing so *bona fide*, they have been able to effect their object of "securing as a party a working majority in every representative body connected with the borough," I cannot refuse my humble meed of admiration for their patience and executive ability. At the same time I must own that the machine seems to me, even in a single borough, a dangerous one to handle. The wheels within wheels of ward committee, general committee, executive committee, ending at last, by a complicated sifting process, in a small "management sub-committee" of ten or eleven members at the outside, must need so much looking after to make them work smoothly, that little leisure will be left to any except the half-dozen sub-committee-men at the centre to attend to anything but the oiling. The mill may grind well enough, but will the rank and file of miller's men ever get a real chance of knowing beforehand what kind of grist is going to be ground? I don't say that they will not. The professions of the leaders are fair, and I have no desire to question the genuineness of their intentions, or ability, to steer clear of the evils of the caucus system. But human nature is weak, and lust of power strong, and one can't help hearing the echo in one's memory of many transatlantic warnings, when we see the Liberal Association posing as "the people in the act of self-government." For myself I confess to deep distrust of

any approach to a system such as that in the United States, when,

“The elect gut the offices down to tide waiter,
And the people took skinning as mild as a tater,
Seemed to choose who they wanted to, footed the bills,
And felt kind as tho’ they wuz hevin’ their wills,
Which kep ’em as harmless and cherfle as crickets;
While all we invested wuz names on the tickets:
Wal, ther’s nothin’ for folks fond of liberal consumption
Free of charge, like democracy tempered with gumption.”*

And the spread of this Liberal Association points disagreeably in this direction.

For, supreme at home, with a working majority in every representative institution connected with the borough, the Birmingham Association has of late turned its attention to foreign conquest. What is good for Birmingham must be good for other places; and accordingly a propagandist movement has been set on foot, to spread the blessings now enjoyed by the metropolis of hardware over the rest of the English boroughs. A confederation of associations on the Birmingham model is spreading rapidly over the country, and adopting, not only the organisation but, the shibboleths of the parent association. Of these the disestablishment and disendowment of the National Church is the most vital—though the county franchise, and redistribution of seats, are often allowed to occupy the foreground for strategical reasons—and every man who cannot pronounce the selected words distinctly is to be marked, and opposed by the confederation.

I will only mention one fact to show how strong

* Lowell’s ‘Biglow Papers,’ 2nd Series.

the pressure has already become. Within a week I have heard three active politicians, all of whom are or have been M.P.s, admit that they expected to have to vote for disestablishment after the next election. They were all men whom I had known to be opposed to that policy, and on questioning them I found that neither of them had changed his opinion on the merits: but as a matter of party expediency all three were prepared to humiliate themselves by sacrificing their convictions. At this rate, as the number of possible candidates is limited, we may have the question settled before it ever comes up again seriously for debate in the great council of the nation.

While there is yet time, then, and before we are all at the mercy of a party organisation with a cut-and-dried bundle of pledges to be swallowed on pain of party ostracism, it is worth while to challenge the authority of those who are asking us to "foot their bills." We shall soon see whether it is their intention to allow the full play of individual conviction around this question, or to force it on an uninstructed public by the skilful use of the "most modern weapons of scientific political warfare."

Meantime, as a thorough-going Liberal, who was trained thirty years ago in the belief that democracy—not "tempered by gumption," but "freed from Jacobinism"—was a cause well worth the devotion of a life, and who has never consciously been false to that early faith, I would ask my brother Liberals to look this matter fairly in the face, and judge it by the true democratic, and therefore by the true Liberal,

test. If they really hold that what our time has to do as its special work, with singleness of purpose and all its might, is, to lift the people to a fair and full share of all the best things of this life,—its highest culture, hopes, aspirations, burdens, as well as its loaves and fishes—to set before them a truly noble ideal of citizenship, and help them to attain that—then I would ask them to look this “next question” round, and see how its decision will tell, not on this class or that class, this party or that party, but on the character and life of our English nation.

That at any rate I hold to be the true work of a Liberal, in a Liberal age. Whatever goes beyond that, or beside that, savours of Jacobinism, for then comes in that jealousy which is the bane of true democracy. The true democrat has no old scores to pay, covets no man’s good things, wants nothing for himself which is not open to his neighbours, will destroy nothing which others value merely because he doesn’t value it himself, unless it is palpably and incurably unjust and unrighteous. I need not go on to contrast the Jacobin with him, beyond saying that the one is before all things constructive, the other destructive. The difference between them will, I hope, come out clearly enough in this discussion.

If the National Church, as we have it in England, is not, in its idea and its essence a truly popular democratic institution, then assuredly it must go, and I for one would not move a finger to preserve it. But let us see how the case really stands, and hear both sides,

before we fold our hands lazily, or let our voices swell a cry, which, come from which side it may, from Liberationists, Ritualists, or Unbelievers, has none of the true democratic ring in it.

These are the three hosts which are joined for the campaign, but it is only the first who have attempted as yet to give any answer to the question from which we must start, what shall we do with the Old Church? Let us see what that answer is, in their own words, taken from the 'Practical Suggestions relative to the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church of England,' published at the office of the Liberation Society.

First, then, the Irish Church Act is not to be followed in its governing principle. That Act dealt at once with the Irish Church as a corporate body; appointed a body of "Commissioners of Church temporalities in Ireland," for the immediate custody and management of its property, and contemplated the formation of a "Church body" in the future, to whom the Commissioners should transfer the property remaining in their hands after the compensations had been paid; and which would become the successor by direct inheritance of the Disestablished Church of Ireland. But, say the Liberationists, this portion of that measure "has been the subject of unfavourable criticism," and so they propose to depart both in principle and detail from the Irish Church Act. One naturally asks, Why? and, though they are careful not to state it plainly themselves, the reason stands out clearly enough in their scheme. "It is of cardinal import-

ance," say the Suggestions, "to recognise the fact that the Church of England is not a corporation." Their object, in short, is, by every possible precaution, to prevent the Episcopal Church, which, as they admit must be hereafter organised in England, from being, either in spiritual or temporal matters, the old Church reorganised, or the lineal and acknowledged heir and successor to the Old Church. Whether the attempt be successful or not there can be no mistake, I think, as to its meaning, which is, to make the transition not as easy but as difficult as possible—not to connect the old order with the new, but to sever them once and for ever. The proposal shows the animus of the present attack, which is simply destructive and Jacobin. "The Irish Church," say the Liberationists, "if it ever revives, as seems not unlikely, will do so as the admitted successor of the Old Church, and has already gained strength from being able to assert that position for herself. We didn't foresee this in the case of Ireland, but will take care, now that we do see it, to hinder any such advantage accruing to the English Church." There is no other interpretation possible of this part of the Suggestions that I can see.

The same jealousy comes out in the compensation clauses. The clergy individually are to be dealt with, and in fixing the amount to be paid in each case, regard is to be had to the fact that "their services will be no longer required." Their parsonages and glebes will vest at once in Commissioners, who will deal with them "in the same way as with the other surplus property coming to their hands." But here

even the Liberation Society feel that "a proposal to eject the inmates of all the parsonages in the country would be regarded as a harsh proceeding," and therefore the suggestion is, that existing incumbents should be allowed to occupy their parsonages, upon payment of rent, "so long as they continue ministers of the churches in which they now officiate:" in other words, should a parson be elected by the future congregation (if any) their minister, he will be allowed to stay in the parsonage paying rent for it, but, when he leaves, it will in any case pass to the nation for secular purposes. These purposes are not at present defined ; it is only insisted that they shall be secular.

So much for the glebes and parsonages. The cathedrals and abbeys, with the bishops' palaces, and "the buildings in the nature of appendages to the cathedrals," (including, I presume, deaneries and canons' houses, schools and almshouses being dealt with separately), are to be at once at the disposal of the state, and are to be placed under national control, for such uses as Parliament may from time to time determine.

It occurs to one here, that should Parliament determine that cathedrals and abbeys shall be maintained for the purposes of worship, these "suggestions" and the whole liberation policy, tumble at once to pieces. For if we are to have any public worship conducted in St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, Canterbury Cathedral, &c., by anybody, under the control of Parliament, that is simply re-establishing a National Church of some kind. It is impossible to suppose that such men as

Messrs. Dale and Crosskey do not see this ; and so one is driven to the conclusion that they do not contemplate the cathedrals and abbeys being used in future for any kind of worship, though it does not of course suit their purpose to put this prominently forward.

Be that as it may, at any rate no analogous provision to that above quoted as to incumbents is made as to cathedral dignitaries. They, it would seem, are not to be allowed to rent their own houses as long as they continue to perform their present duties ; for the simple reason, I presume, that they are not in any case to be allowed to perform those duties in the future.

Let me then just point out how the scheme thus proposed would work in a case which is familiar, and I presume of some interest, to every Englishman.

In our own day, and specially within the last fifteen years, Westminster Abbey has been restored and beautified with a thoughtfulness and reverence which have doubled its value to the nation. The great English memories with which it is culotté (if I may use the phrase which best expresses my meaning) have become the property of the people as they never have been till now. Crowds of them—from royal suites to working men's clubs and pauper children—visit it at short intervals, and learn from the successor to the proud old mitred abbots the stories, glorious, pathetic, tragic, humorous, but all full of deepest national and human interest and instruction, which haunt every tomb and column

and niche of the building. Four or five times a week (besides the ordinary daily services) the foremost scholars and orators in the National Church preach there to ever-increasing crowds, till there is no such sight I imagine in the world as the Abbey congregations on Sundays and saints' days. Now apply the Suggestions, and what happens?

The Dean, who by the devotion of fifteen years of his life has perfected this work for the nation, must be turned out at once with a pension, his connection with the Abbey ceasing absolutely—for I don't see that he would, under the "Suggestions" scheme, be even allowed to hire his own house—and all religious services would thenceforth cease in the Abbey.

And what has been going on in St. Peter's Abbey has been going on in every cathedral in the kingdom. They have become the people's churches in a sense which is as real as it is astonishing. And all this the Liberationists and their allies are not only willing, but apparently anxious to destroy in the sacred name of religious equality, to which they do service with their lips, while in their hearts they must either hate or misunderstand it. To the average Englishman, the idea of shutting off the services of the Abbey, and driving the Dean out of the Westminster precincts by Act of Parliament, will seem the queerest kind of Liberal measure—the most remarkable boon to the people, and step in the direction of true democracy—yet suggested in our time.

But the Liberationists will turn on me and ask, as they have full right to do, What, then, do you

Nationalists, Church Reformers, or whatever you please to call yourselves, mean to do in this matter? You talk of a public Church, a national Church, a democratic Church, fitted for the new time. You own that the Church of England as it stands to-day is not such a Church. How are you going to make it so?

Well, so far as method goes, we reply, by the same machinery as you would use for its destruction. The nation in its great Council must remodel the Church, as it did three hundred years ago: and, much as the task goes against the grain, Parliament will have to face it in one form or another, and that before long. The sooner all statesmen understand that, the better it will be for us all. As to the principles upon which the work should be done, I don't think there will be much difference of opinion amongst Liberal Churchmen, though the details will, of course, develop very great differences. We should all agree, then, I think, that the Church should be made in fact, what she is in theory, the Church of the nation. To this end she should be made wide enough to include all English Christians who own no human allegiance outside their own nation. Further than this we cannot go, because to do so would destroy the national idea, the cornerstone on which, humanly speaking, our Church rests. A universal Church we look for, but only as composed of independent national Churches, and with no human head. If there are groups of English Christians who still insist on standing apart, so it must be. We cannot help it. All the nation can do is to make the

standing ground wide enough inside for all who like to come there.

Starting from this point we can approach every vexed question with confidence. Let us try it on one or two of them. Of the most notorious, the Burials Bill, it is scarcely worth while to speak here. Every Liberal Churchman is not only willing, but anxious that Nonconformists should bury their dead in the national graveyards, with their own services, under such regulations only as will insure reverence. By so doing they are acknowledging the national character at any rate of Church property. Many of us hold that they have the right already to what they ask in this matter, without any alteration in the law.

But the churchyards are only a step to the churches? Well: even should this prove to be so the nerves of Liberal Churchmen may endure the shock. We do not desire to be soldiers holding intrenchments against enemies (unless driven into that attitude). We must acknowledge that there is plenty of spare room in our fabrics, and that the national services leave much time unoccupied. The spirit of a national Church should not be one of jealous exclusiveness, and the best traditions of ours are in favour of hospitality. The fugitives from Alva's persecutions were received as brethren, and had parish churches allotted for their worship, at Colchester and elsewhere. A chapel in Canterbury Cathedral was set apart for the French Huguenots, after the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and is still used by their Presbyterian descendants. We should be prepared then to consider any such

proposals, if made, with a sincere desire to make all concessions consistent with the maintenance of order. We should hail with pleasure the restoration of the old liberty (for instance) of throwing open Church pulpits to persons not in Anglican orders. But there must be no anarchy ; and there is neither demand for, nor advantage in, extravagant concessions, which would raise alarm amongst Churchmen, and which Non-conformists would not welcome.

Working on the same principle in other directions, Liberal Churchmen would desire to see the Act of Uniformity repealed—the subscription to the Articles given up altogether. Their only use now is a mischievous one, if, as is said, they hinder the ablest and most conscientious young men from taking orders, which they would be ready and anxious to do, were they only required to declare that they can use the Common Prayer Book, and conduct public worship as there prescribed, loyally and with a whole mind. It will be also desirable to remove great stumbling-blocks, like the Athanasian creed, from the place they now occupy. The Irish Church have already done this, with the most beneficial results, so that there is good precedent for the change. Other modifications in the rubrics and Common prayer would be necessary, upon the liberal and Christian principle of avoiding offence wherever this can be done without abandoning essentials, or violating principles.

The same liberal and tolerant policy should be followed in all matters of discipline and ritual, and in dealing with questions of patronage and endowments.

That wisdom and forbearance and patience will be necessary in order to work out such a reconstruction in Parliament is of course true : but then it is equally true of all important work which Parliament has to do, and I fail to see what is the great advantage of our boasted methods of government and legislation, if they are unable to deal in this spirit with the most important national concerns.

Indeed, as the nation is in any case to be forced to face this question by those who admit that it will rouse "passionate discord from one end of the kingdom to the other," I believe that Parliament will find it quite as easy, and certainly as wise and patriotic, to reform and reconstruct the old foundations and superstructure, as to make a clean sweep and begin building again from the ground.

It would be out of place to dwell further here on the details of the reforms which may be necessary to make our Church in fact what it still is, and always has been, in theory, national and popular. Enough, I hope, has been said to prove that Liberal Churchmen will not shrink from that task, but will be ready to consider all such proposals on their merits, come from what quarter they may. It does not lie in our mouth to object to Mr. Leatham and Mr. Richards as Church Reformers. They have just as much right as we to take that position, and we shall gladly help them ; merely remarking, in passing, that if they had been of this mind in the last Parliament, a long step might have been then taken in the direction of Church Reform. But my object now is, not to raise discussion on details,

but to assert a principle. I would appeal to my countrymen, especially to those who call themselves Liberals, not to be satisfied with the commonplaces which pass muster in our ranks, but to look a great question fairly in the face, and make up their own minds about it honestly and independently.

I should have been glad if I could have put what I have to say on the subject in another form than that which I have been led to adopt. No one is more thoroughly aware than I of the defects inherent in such addresses as those collected in this volume, and if I had believed that I could have attracted more readers by throwing my views into a more methodical shape, I would gladly have given whatever labour might have been required for that end. But, for one man or woman who will take the trouble to master a carefully written treatise on such a subject, such as that of Mr. Harwood, there are a hundred nowadays (the more the pity) who will read a short address, printed just as it was spoken : and it is numbers who will have to settle this question in the end, and to whom the appeal must be made. Besides, I must repeat, time presses. "The citadel of the Establishment," the *Liberator* tells us, "must be approached by mines," and when people are at work undermining the foundation of your house, you will not wait for a Toledo rapier or a Krupp gun, but catch hold of the first stick which lies ready to hand. To any who may wish to study the subject more carefully, I can recommend Mr. Harwood's book, and Dean Stanley's *Essays on Church and State* ; meantime, I trust that the most

hasty reader will, at all events, find enough in these pages to convince him that, apart from all higher considerations, the disestablishment of the Church of England is a business, even in a political point of view, upon which Liberals cannot enter with light hearts and closed eyes, if they mean to be true to their principles.

If they distrust such appeals from a Churchman, let me cite a witness from the foremost ranks of the Liberationists themselves. Mr. Laxton, who represents the policy of the "Suggestions for Disestablishment" already referred to, denounces the Irish Church Act more bitterly than any Episcopalian, as the "most prodigious blunder that a statesman ever committed," and declares that Mr. Gladstone "has not liberated the Irish Church, but delivered it up bound hand and foot into the hands of a priestly party," and that "rather than see the same thing done in England, he would vote that the present connection between Church and State, with all its evils, should be perpetuated for ever." If this be so in the case of the green tree, what will be done in the dry? An alien Church which had never taken fair root in the soil, which reminded three-fourths of the people of cruel wrongs, and the remaining fourth of an ascendancy won and kept by the sword, could make terms which can wring such a protest from able and thorough advocates of the separation of Church and State in England. Is it the part of wise men to carry the experiment further?

But I am far from wishing that the issue should be tried on any but the highest grounds, and will state it

therefore in the words of one of the strongest Liberals and truest and bravest Englishman of this century—the man who was the first to open one of our seats of the highest education of Nonconformists.

“The Church of Christ,” Arnold wrote in December 1831, “was originally distinct from the national society, to which its members belonged as citizens or subjects. It was promised, that these National Societies should become Christian Societies ; and so they have become, but, unfortunately not so entirely in spirit as in name. Hence, many good men wish the two societies to be again distinct, believing that the Church is more likely to be secularised by the union, than the nation to be Christianised. And, doubtless, as things are and have been, this belief has too much to warrant it. But, on the other hand, as things ought to be, and as I believe they yet may be, the happier alternative is the one to be looked to, namely, the carrying forward God’s work to its completion—the making the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of Christ ; not partially, or almost, but altogether, in spirit and in truth. It is certainly very bad to remain as we are ; and to go back to the original state of the Church would be most desirable, if we could have no hope of going on to that glorious state of perfection for which Christ designed it. But this hope is too precious to be lightly abandoned, and our present state is a step to something better, however little we have chosen to make it so ; the means are yet in our hands, which it seems far better to use, even at the eleventh hour, than desperately to throw them away.”

II.

ADVANTAGES OF A PUBLIC CHURCH.

[Reprinted from the *Birmingham Gazette*.]

THE following speech was made at a meeting held in the Town Hall of Birmingham, on the 7th of November, 1872, under the presidency of J. D. Goodman, Esq. The Liberation Society had lately been holding a series of meetings in that town, at which facts, and the views and principles of Churchmen, had been so misrepresented, that it was considered wise to let the other side be heard. The meeting was, I believe, called by the local branches of the Church Defence and Church Aid Societies, to neither of which do I belong ; but I was requested to attend, and move the following resolution, and did so. I should add, that the meeting was specially intended for work-people.

The resolution was as follows :—

“Believing that there are some matters in the administration of the Church which depress many of her friends, and give a handle to her adversaries, this meeting believes it to be the wisdom of the friends of

the Church to endeavour to carry out those reforms which may be calculated to increase and extend her usefulness, such, for example as the following:—(1) Reform of Convocation, so as to secure a more adequate representation of the Church. (2) The provision of some means whereby the laity of a parish or congregation may have a voice in Church work. (3) The adoption of a scheme whereby all traffic in benefices may be abolished without disregard of existing rights and interests. (4) The substitution of a less objectionable plan in the appointment of bishops for the *congé d'élire*. (5) The utilisation of cathedral endowments to a greater extent for spiritual and practical work in harmony with the parochial system. (6) The union of small parishes, and the augmentation of poor livings to a fair minimum."

I am glad that the resolution you have placed in my hands refers to reforms in the national Church. Defence apart from reform I could not support. I probably occupy a very different position on this platform from most of those who will speak to-night and look at this question from quite a different point of view. I come here as a Radical. I entirely accept on this question, as on every other, the test of "the greatest good (not happiness) of the greatest number." I desire to apply this test strictly, and to ask, "Will disestablishment benefit the greatest number of living Englishmen—is it likely to make them wiser, stronger, more righteous?" If Mr. Miall, or the Liberation Society can show me that it will, I will join them

then and there; for I hold that the Established Church was made for the nation, not the nation for the Established Church.

Now, I wish at once to escape from generalities, and to put the case in what seems to me the most direct and practical manner. Let us take the first carpenter, smith, labourer, or other poor man we meet with in town or country, and ask ourselves, "What good will happen to this man—and to those like him who form the great mass of the English nation, and are therefore in my judgment entitled to the first consideration—by disestablishment?" I must make one assumption, however, at starting, and that is, that the English nation still has a respect for Christianity, and desires to continue Christian. I do not dispute, of course, that there are a large number of persons, ranging from the Duke of Somerset to Mr. Bradlaugh, who hold Christianity to be a played out superstition, and most of whom desire every trace of it to be swept away. But I do believe that these persons make a noise entirely disproportionate to their numbers, or their wisdom, and that I am right in assuming that the nation is Christian, and wishes to remain so. At any rate I have a right to assume this in arguing with the Liberationists, for it is just as much a part of their case (as put by Mr. Miall and their recognised leaders and organs) as it is of ours. This being so, let us return to my carpenter.

In this month of November, 1872, there is no corner of this island in which he will not find an educated clergyman, for whom he, as an Englishman,

has a right to send, and who is bound to come and minister to him in all spiritual things, if he will accept the ministration, and is not living in open sin. In every corner of the island there is a building in which generations of Englishmen have worshipped for hundreds of years, and into which he has an undoubted right to go and worship, without the power in any person whatever to ask him a question, or take a penny from him.

Let me put the case as I see it in another form. You in Birmingham have of late come to the conclusion, and have been urging on your representatives, that a constant water supply is one of the necessities of wholesome living. In this I cordially agree. Now, suppose that we had a great system of reservoirs and aqueducts in this island, which had been provided and paid for by munificent persons, or by the State, hundreds of years ago—so long ago, indeed, that the best authorities differ as to how it was paid for—and which brought a constant supply of water to the door of every cottage in the kingdom. Suppose that this supply was thus offered free of all cost, and that every English citizen was perfectly free to take it or let it alone, as he pleased. What would my friend the working man think of politicians who, in the name of advanced Liberalism, were to say to him, “This State water supply is a gross breach of sanitary equality; the State has no business to give us water for nothing. The offer demoralises us. Help us to pull down these aqueducts, and build hospitals and schools with the stones. Water which the State supplies for nothing

must be bad. There can't be enough fixed air in it. Try our pump!"

I think the working man would be likely to answer, when he had looked well round the proposal, "Well, I don't use much water myself; but the women want it; and perhaps the children may get a taste for it. So, on the whole, I will let the old waterworks alone. The stuff seems to have been good enough for my grandfather, and if I don't want it I needn't take it, and at any rate I don't pay for it. When I seem to want more fixed air in my water, I will come and buy my pennyworth at your pump." Now, just change the word "water," into "worship and the ministrations of religion," and you have the case of the national Church. Here in England we have an establishment, entirely under the control of the nation, by means of which, what even Messrs. Dale and Crosskey will, I think, allow to be a not entirely objectionable form of Christian worship, and all the ministrations of religion are freely offered to every British subject. Since the Toleration Act no British subject has been obliged to use this worship. In our own time every disability has been removed from those who will not use it, or, if there be any shadow of disabilities left, these may be easily abolished. Whether we use this worship or let it alone, not a man of us need pay a penny towards its maintenance unless we like. And all this being beyond dispute, I would just ask the working man what he is likely to gain by sweeping away the whole system? In what respect—spiritual, moral, or material—are you, my friend the carpenter, going to be

the better for disestablishment? I ask the great mass of my poorer countrymen, to whom the Liberation Society has appealed, and who, both sides admit, have no great interest yet in this controversy, to answer me this simple question, for as yet I have heard no answer from any quarter.

Well, then, if, as I maintain, the existence of the establishment (that is to say of the direct and avowed connection between this nation and Christianity) forces nothing on you, and takes nothing away from you; if you are just as free and as well off, whether it continues or whether it ceases, just let me ask you to try to understand the case of those to whom it has a very deep and real meaning—my case, for instance, and that of many others, who have always endeavoured to gain for you your fair share of political power, of mental culture, and of all the good things of this world.

We believe, then, in the first place, that the connection between State and Church as it exists in England has this immense value, that it forces on the Legislature, on the Government, on statesmen, on all men engaged in public affairs—and so, upon the national conscience—the fact that the nation in its corporate capacity has a spiritual as well as a material life; that it cannot, even if it would, confine itself to the preservation of material things, of body and goods. The endeavour to separate things secular from things spiritual in individual, family, or national life, is, we hold, a grievous blunder, and certain to prove both mischievous and futile. The man, the family, the nation, *must* live both

lives. We desire that they may be pledged as deeply as possible to live them according to Christian standards.

Again, the connection of Church and State (in England, at any rate, if not everywhere) is the surest guarantee for keeping the religion of the country broad and comprehensive. The national Church is accused of latitudinarianism, that it embraces men of very different beliefs; of "multitudinism;" that it makes no attempt to distinguish between spiritual and unspiritual men. One of the ablest advocates of disestablishment urges this argument in these words: "The early Churches, like modern Congregational Churches, had clearly some means of distinguishing between catechumens and the faithful, of determining, that is, the distinctive religious character of individual men. And if, as communities of the faithful, Churches are to exist at all, the distinction must be maintained." Now it seems to me one of the most precious characteristics of the national Church that it makes no such attempt, draws no such distinction. What human power *can* determine, or ought to try to determine, what are "the distinctive religious characters of individual men"? Let both grow together till the harvest. But, once sever the connection of Church and State—take the Church from under the control of Parliament and the law courts, and who shall say that it will not follow the example of all other English denominations, and set about this wretched sifting sectarian business? In any case, Church membership would no longer remain the birthright of every Englishman.

Again, if you sever the connection you must make the Church a corporation, independent of the State. Are we prepared to do this? Parliament hesitates before the proposal to allow the amalgamation of two great railway companies. Such a corporation would be too powerful, it is said. What, then, of such a corporation as our national Church would become, if disestablished? "The Protestant Church" says Dr. Newman, in his 'Historical Sketches' (p. 230), "would be an *imperium in imperio*, considering the immense wealth and power and influence of its constituent members, were it itself a corporation." It would, indeed, be a corporation as powerful as, not two, but all the railway companies of the kingdom, if it held together.

Yes, I shall of course be told, "if it held together," but it will break in pieces. And then, I reply, when it has broken, say into three sections, we arrive at this result, that there will be three more denominations in England—separated only by differences which it is clear need not divide Christian men, for they exist now side by side in the national Church—and every one of us will have lost his rights in two-thirds at least of the old national places of worship. I cannot understand why religious men should think this so great an improvement.

But, I may be told, these differences of yours are so great, that, as honest men, you *ought* to be in three or four different communities. I cannot think so; indeed, I do not see why, so far as doctrinal differences are concerned, all the Protestant denominations should not be in the same communion, as they were in the

Tudor times. Dean Stanley's name for the Dissenting denominations, or free Churches, as they seem now to delight to call themselves, "non-conforming members of the Church of England," describes accurately the view which national Churchmen should take of them. But for the Act of Uniformity they might be so now. That Act, always mischievous, has become practically powerless; has already been in part repealed, and I trust may be wholly repealed before long. "Pity," said Dr. Allen to Sheldon, when it was passed in 1662, "you have made the door so strait;" and after two hundred years, during which it has driven many of the best and most zealous Christians out of the national Church—in the latter years of which it has been practically ignored, not only by extreme Ritualists, but by good moderate Churchmen—surely it is time to get it buried.

Let me now remind you that the great names in the great times of the godly denominations were in favour of a national Church. In the times of the Commonwealth Dr. Owen, their foremost representative in the Long Parliament, denounced strongly those who maintained that the State had no concern with religion. Calamy wished to conform; Baxter and Matthew Henry wrote strongly in favour of a national Church, though they could not conform; and the followers of Wesley never proposed to separate from the national Church till after the death of their founder. Our chief business seems to me to be now, so to provide for the future that no such defections as those of the Non-Jurors and the Wesleys can

possibly happen, and that, perhaps, some of those who have seceded may be led back to the national communion.

But if this is to be we must consider what reforms are required, for the Church must meet the times as well as all other institutions. First, then, we are bound to consider any grievances which Dissenters still put forward. These are practically reduced, so far as I know, to two. They cannot bury their dead with their own services in the parochial graveyards; and their members are still excluded from some of the highest posts in the national universities. I think the Church would be wise to meet the Dissenters more than half-way in both cases. I find it difficult to be patient with the spirit in which Mr. Osborne Morgan's bill is met in the House of Commons by Mr. Beresford Hope and others, who profess to represent the National Church. It enables one to understand, and make allowance for, that attitude of watchful jealousy which, as Mr. Winterbotham said two years ago, is habitual with Dissenters. If we take away these last remnants of ascendancy, we may hope to see the "watchful jealousy" give place to a better feeling, and one more in accordance with the teaching of St. Paul and St. John. For, beyond question, a sense of social inferiority is at the bottom of much of the bitterness which finds expression in the Liberation movement. The clergy of the Established Church have, as a rule, had educational advantages from which the Dissenting clergy have been excluded, and treat Nonconformist ministers as

an inferior caste. When, as I hope soon to see, they are educated side by side at the universities, much of this feeling will disappear. Indeed, the effect which recent legislation has had on the best and most cultivated Dissenters is a most hopeful sign of what we may look for when perfect religious equality in these respects has been established.

We need not look for perfect uniformity, and I, for one, should not care to see it. In a country of free thought, it would indicate an unnatural state. We never have had it in England, and never can. There will always be a large minority at any rate of Englishmen, who would sooner be big fish in a small hole than small fish in a big hole ; and while this is so we must expect to have Dissenting denominations, or free Churches. But there is no reason why the Church and the Nonconformists should not work together, side by side, at their Master's business, if their officers had only something more of their Master's spirit.

But, besides these remnants of grievance which Dissenters can still allege, and by far more serious, are the anomalies which exist inside the Church, weakening its power, and paralysing its energies ; and these it should be the object of every good Churchman to reform. Several of the most pressing of these much-needed reforms are referred to in this resolution. I will follow the order in which they are placed before you there. First, as to Convocation. No Churchman, I believe, would now deny that this body needs radical reform. At present it represents nothing but

the clergy, and this in an utterly inadequate manner. In the Lower House more than two-thirds are deans, archdeacons, and other *ex officio* members. If it is to continue it is indeed necessary that it should be reformed, so as to secure a more adequate representation of the whole Church. I confess, however, that I am not sanguine as to the reform of Convocation, and do not see clearly the advantage of such a body in a truly national Church, or how any legislative power can be given to it which will not interfere with the authority and lessen the power of the national Legislature.

But there is no such difficulty as to the second proposal in this resolution, the provision of some mode whereby the laity of a parish may have a voice in Church work. There is no question which has been more thoroughly discussed than this, and the conclusion is almost unanimous that the formation of parochial councils is the proper method. Lord Sandon's Parochial Councils Bill embodies this reform, and is to be introduced again in the coming session. It is worthy of the support of all Churchmen, and, I trust, may become law in spite of the active opposition of those Churchmen who oppose all reform.

Then comes the question of the sale of benefices, the great scandal of our Church; and here, again, I rejoice to think that there is little real difference of opinion. Simony in all its forms must be abolished. The evil is, indeed to some extent, curing itself already in the presence of this better feeling, for advowsons have declined in value to a point which prac-

tically prohibits their sale. But there is urgent need of legislation on the subject, and whatever course may be taken as to patronage generally, one thing should be insisted on. The parishioners through their council should at least have a veto on the appointment of their clergyman.

The fourth reform suggested in the resolution refers to the appointment of bishops. No doubt there are many objections to the present system. The *congé d'élire* is a clumsy and obsolete method, but as yet opinion is not matured on this question, and one may simply take note of it as a matter to be carefully considered.

In the same way, although it is generally agreed that cathedral endowments should be utilised to a greater extent for some spiritual and practical work in harmony with the parochial system, no plan has been matured for the purpose. It will be enough that we should affirm the proposition generally, without pledging ourselves to any particular scheme.

And now we come to the last, and, I think, the most important of the reforms referred to in this resolution—the union of small parishes and the amalgamation of small livings. The parochial system has always been, and must continue to be, the mainstay or backbone of a national Church. But the constant shifting of population has thrown the old machinery out of gear. The pressing need of reform in this direction has long been recognised, and to a certain extent met by the Act which allows the union of neighbouring benefices where the population does

not exceed 1,500. But this is merely a makeshift. A friend of mine, an ardent Church Reformer, who has gone very carefully into this question, brings out the following remarkable results. Taking a population of 300 as the lowest which will provide work for a clergyman, and £200 as the lowest income which will provide him with decent maintenance, there are at present 1,409 livings which provide neither work nor food, 1,141 which provide food but not work, 3,032 which provide work but not food, and, of the last division, many hundreds consist of the poorest suburban populations of great towns, the very places where spiritual destitution prevails most, and the need is the sorest. In the face of such facts as these it is high time that Churchmen bestirred themselves.

The ancient Church of the nation must be reformed, and can easily be reformed if her children are wise in time, so as to remove all reasonable cause of offence. If she moves steadily in this direction, she may disregard the indiscriminate attacks which are made on her, and abide the issue with confidence. Her best defence is reform; her greatest danger the temptation to return railing for railing. I wish we could see the controversy carried on, on one side at least, as carried on it must be, in a very different spirit from that which prevails in not a few of what are called Church Defence organisations. I don't know how you feel, my friends, on this subject; but to me it is a saddening and humiliating thought that we should have at this time to fight this battle, not

with that one-third of our countrymen who (according to your member, Mr. Dixon) are not Christians at all, but with the one-third who believe in and worship the same Lord with us. Nothing but the most earnest conviction that the severance of this immemorial connection—this attempt to relegate the State to material things, and to declare that the nation as a nation has nothing to say, has no help to give, in the sore struggles of humanity to rise out of the material to something higher—should induce me to take part in it. For I can take little interest in the questions which divide Christian Churches and sects, can see no reason why they should not now be working side by side to redeem our waste places, and to make the kingdoms of this world the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Let me close what I have to say with a Church legend, which seems to me full of wisdom for this controversy. St. Ambrose was a holy man and exceeding zealous, even to slaying, for the one true creed. One day as he was walking in deep meditation as to how to bring all men to his own mind, he was aware of a stream, and a youth seated beside it. He had never seen so beautiful a countenance, and sat down by him to speak of those things on which his mind continually dwelt. To his horror he found that the beautiful face covered a most heretical mind, and he spoke in sorrowful anger to the youth of his danger. Whereupon the young stranger produced six or seven vases, all of different shapes and colours,

and, as he filled them from the brook, said to the saint (as the legend is versified by Mr. Lowell)—

“Now Ambrose, thou maker of creeds, look here—
As into these vases this water I pour ;
One shall hold less, another more ;
But the water the same in every case,
Shall take the figure of the vase.
O thou who wouldst unity reach through strife,
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of Life ?”

When Ambrose looked up, the youth, the vases, and the stream were gone ; but he knew he had talked with an angel, and his heart was changed. I wish that angel would come and do a great deal of preaching to our English Ambroses.

III.

ESTABLISHED AND VOLUNTARY
CHURCHES IN CONTRAST.

(An Address delivered at St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich, at the request of the Church Defence Association, on Monday evening, May 12th, 1873.)

[Reprinted from the *Norfolk Chronicle*.]

THE MEETING was a very noisy one, strong partisans on both sides being present, so, to make the allusions clear, I have been obliged to leave some of the interruptions as they were reported, while striking out mere notices of applause or dissent.

MR. SHERIFF, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN.—I trust that my friends around me will not think I am beginning by telling tales out of school if I venture to confide to this great meeting a little secret. When I undertook to deliver this address in your great city, I of course entered into correspondence with the officers of this association. I wrote to the secretary to state that I should deliver it "as a politician." I confess, sir, that the remarks which have just fallen from you have explained to me what I thought was rather

unnecessary alarm on the part of the gentlemen who had invited me here when that announcement came to them. But I see now since our chairman's address the grounds upon which I was warned that it was not as a politician that I was expected to appear here to-night. Now, my friends, I see very good reason for that little alarm. Politics, in the ordinary sense of the word, are so mixed up with those party squabbles in which I and my hon. friend (Mr. Clare Read), whom I am glad to see here, and who sits on the opposite side of the House to myself, are often engaged in St. Stephen's, Westminster, that I don't wonder that those who are convening these meetings for so great a purpose as that for which we are gathered here to-night should wish to abstain as much as possible from the word "politics." But just let me explain very shortly why it is that on all such occasions as this I stand before any audience which may come to listen to me as a politician. As I understand the word "politician," it means a man who, whatever his other engagements in life may be, and however he may earn his daily bread, feels above all things deeply interested, feels that he is bound to be deeply interested, and to take as active a part as he can, in the public affairs of his country. A politician of that kind is, I believe, a specially English institution. I believe that every Englishman, if he is worth anything at all, is bound to be a politician, and can't for the life of him help taking a deep interest in the public affairs of his country. My friends, what is the object of politics in that sense? The object of politics is the well-being

of the nation. ["That's it."] I am glad to hear an enthusiastic friend below applaud that sentiment. I am quite sure that it will gain applause not only from him but from everybody who hears me to-night. The object of politics is the well-being of the nation, or, as we heard in that noble lesson which was read yesterday morning in our churches, to make "a wise and an understanding people." Now, what are the means by which a wise and an understanding people is to be made? Well, of course, the chief means of making a wise and understanding people is by training them up in wisdom and understanding. The State wants men who are brave, truthful, generous; the State wants women who are pure, simple, gentle. By what means is the State to get citizens of that kind?

Such a politician, then, looking around him and seeing how the national conscience is to be touched—for unless the national conscience be touched you can never raise citizens of that kind—finds that the great power which alone can do it, in this as in other free countries, is that which goes by the name of religion. He finds also that the Christian religion prevails in this country, and that it is by means of this Christian religion that all the civilisation and all the progress of the nation has been hitherto attained.

What does he find next? He finds all over this country, in every parish and in every great town and in every corner of this land, a number of magnificent buildings—cathedrals, churches, schools—all belonging to this religion, which is the religion of the English nation—the religion of England. [A Voice: "What

about Rome?" and interruption.] He finds a regular organisation existing all over the country of persons—professional persons—engaged in this special work of touching the national conscience, educating the boys and girls, the men and women, and making them more moral and wiser and better through the instrumentality of this religion.

He sees next that, spread all over the country, there are many other religious societies—many different communities of Christians engaged in work of the same kind—yet that this one society alone, which is by far the largest, by far the most powerful, by far the richest, has been for more than a thousand years—in fact ever since this nation could be called a nation at all—intimately connected with the government of the nation and under the control of that government. He finds that in this largest, richest, and greatest of religious communities all the chief officers are appointed by the government for the time being—that is to say, by the nation; that its discipline, its ritual, its doctrine are all under the control of the nation, and that this intimate connection has been kept up, as I have said before, for upwards of a thousand years.

He finds, furthermore, that these other religious societies, although they are not so large, although hardly any of them have existed for more than 200 years, yet they, although not connected with the State, are under the protection of the State, are protected by the laws, and have a position—an established position—under the laws of the country to do the work they

have got to do in the country. If there are any gentlemen from Nonconforming communities here to-night, as I trust there may be, I suppose that they will protest against my using the word "established" in connection with them. All I have to say is that the word is not mine, but that the connection between them and the State has been laid down to be an "*established*" connection by one of the greatest lawyers who has ever sat on the Bench of England. I am alluding now to the great judgment of Lord Mansfield, from which I will give you a few words to show you the real position which these Nonconforming communities occupy in this country in the eye of the law. The case to which I refer—and I daresay many of my Nonconformist friends if they are here, know it as well as I do—is the great case of 1767, the City of London *v.* Evans.

Mr. Evans was an eminent citizen of London. He was a Nonconformist, and on being elected to the office of Sheriff he said—"I won't be the Sheriff of London. You cannot have a man as Sheriff of London unless he has taken the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England within a year from the time of his appointment. I have never done this, I never mean to do it, and I won't serve the office of Sheriff." What did the Corporation of London do? They sat in council and they fined him a heavy fine. He went into the courts of law to see whether they could enforce that fine against him or not. His defence was that he was a Nonconformist; that according to the Toleration Act he had a right to

be a Nonconformist and not to receive the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England ; that not receiving it he was not liable to be made Sheriff, and the fine could not be imposed upon him. What said Lord Mansfield ? He decided entirely in his favour. He said that the Toleration Act had freed all Nonconformists from the liability to serve. I want particularly to call your attention to his words, because they justify me in the use of the word "established" with regard to Nonconformists : "The Dissenters' way of worship is not only exempted from punishment, it is rendered innocent and lawful ; *it is established* ; it is put under the protection, and not merely under the connivance of the law."

This is the status and position of those other communities to which I have referred, and therefore, they should consider before they use the word "Establishment" as a kind of sneer with regard to the national Church of England.

Now, from this bird's-eye view, as I may say, of the position of things in England, on this very great subject, what are the conclusions which an ordinary politician wishing for the well-being of his country would draw ? It appears to me that the first conclusion he would draw would be, that this arrangement which has existed as regards the Established Church for more than a thousand years, as regards these Nonconformist societies for more than two hundred years, must be an arrangement which must meet very fairly some particular need of this English nation. I think we must conclude, too, that this

arrangement has worked well as regards this country, because I don't suppose that anybody who is a citizen of this country is not proud of being a citizen,—I don't suppose that there is any one in this large assembly, either man or woman, who would change his or her English citizenship for that of any other country in the world. And I think he will also come to the conclusion, looking around him on what is happening in the other nations of the world about this time, regarding the question from the point of view that I have indicated, that this is not quite the time to be overturning old foundations without some very good reason. At such a time as that in which we live we should not rashly cut off any of our old links with the past without trying very steadily, and testing very severely, whether they won't stand the strain of the present—whether they are not better for this time than anything we should be likely to make under new circumstances ?

Well, then, having come so far, my friend, the politician,—i.e., I, myself,—holding the views which I have explained, has got to meet certain other facts ; the conclusions to which he has come are met with certain facts which, of course, at the first blush disturb them very much. For what does he find ? He finds that all those, or almost all those, other Christian communities of which I have spoken, which are not directly in connection with the State, are wishing and striving to sever that connection between the State and religion which exists between the State and the Established Church. These are not persons

who are irreligious. Remember, all those Nonconformists who are trying to sever the connection between the State and the Established Church will tell you they believe just as heartily as we do in the paramount need and importance of religion to the State. And yet they tell us that although they believe in the paramount need and importance of religion to the State, the very best way they can think of to get Christianity, to get religion known and honoured in this country, is to abolish all national recognition of it. [“Oh, oh,” and ironical cheers.] Well, that is to me, I confess—[Interruption by SCURLL frequently repeating, “Take away the money.”] If my noisy friend down there will have the goodness just to wait, we shall come to the money in plenty of time. But this question is a matter so serious, and requires such very temperate statement, and such very careful consideration, that I sincerely trust you won’t import into it any of those noisy ebullitions which one expects in an ordinary political meeting, but which I must say are not in place at a meeting called for so solemn a purpose as that for which we are met to-night.

Then, when I find Christians for whom I myself have the greatest respect maintaining this, of course, I, as a politician, am obliged to look very carefully over those conclusions to which I have come, and I am bound to consider very carefully the arguments of those who oppose them.

This brings me to another point. I told you that I started as a politician, and now I stand before you as a Liberal politician. Let me explain my idea of a

Liberal politician. A Liberal politician is a man who looks to the future and not to the past ; he looks for progress ; he desires to see the whole nation raised ; he desires it to go on from better things to better things, and he is not afraid of new things ; he holds that every institution must be tried by its worth and its value to the nation ;—he holds above all things that there should be equality before the law for every institution, for every society, and for every individual citizen. Well, then he comes right upon the question that presses upon us all in considering these subjects—he comes upon the question, What is religious equality ?

I have had to think a great deal upon this subject for my own guidance in public life, and I will tell you what I think are the real tests of religious equality. In the first place, if there is to be religious equality every Englishman must be free within certain limits (which I will explain directly) to set up, and to enjoy, any form of religion that he pleases. This is, I think, the first requisite of religious equality. The second requisite of religious equality is this—that no citizen shall be bound to contribute to a religion which he does not believe in. The third requisite I take to be this—that every man shall be free to use or to let alone those religious appliances which the State has to offer to him. In order to make a perfect and exhaustive division of the subject, I think there is a fourth, and that is that every man shall be free to try to alter the conditions on which the State offers its religious appliances to the people of the country.

Now then, my friends, just try this question of religious equality as regards the national Church by every one of these tests. In the first place, is every man in England free to set up and to enjoy any form of religion that he pleases? You perfectly well know—and in stating what is done universally in England I shall be able to show you where the hand of the State comes in, and where the people are stopped in this matter—you know perfectly well there are Mormon congregations in this country, that Mormons are perfectly free to assemble and worship as they please. But the State simply steps in and says that Mormons shall not in this country be allowed to marry two wives; if a man marries two wives he is indicted for bigamy, but so long as he desires only to worship in the Mormon form, whatever that may be, he is not prohibited doing so here.

Well, in London there have been a number of gentlemen—some of them have left the Church of England, and some have left other communities—who have been setting up a purely secular religion; and nobody has hindered them, because they may set up any worship they please, provided they don't break the law. I will give you one more instance, because, so far as I know, that particular body is confined to the eastern counties. I don't know whether you have any in Norwich, but I know they are scattered about in the eastern counties; and they are the people who call themselves "the Peculiar People." Now, the Peculiar People are perfectly free in this country to worship just as they please, but

one of their tenets is, that it is wicked to use medicine, and so they let their children die because they won't allow them to be attended by any medical man. The law steps in then and says, "We can't allow this; have any religious worship or belief you please, but you must attend to your children, and shall not allow them to die from the want of medical attendance."

As I have said, the first test of religious equality is that every man shall be free to set up and to enjoy any worship he pleases, and so far at least no one can deny that we have perfect religious equality in England.

The second test is, that no man shall be called upon to pay for a form of worship which he does not approve. Now, no man in this country is called upon to pay a single penny since Church-rates—[cheers, and noise in front of the platform]—I say that it is the second condition of religious equality that no man shall be called upon to pay for a religion he does not believe in, and since the abolition of Church-rates no man has a single penny to pay to the Church unless he pleases. This is too long a business to go into; but if all my friends in this room will just think and consider for themselves, they will find that they have not had to pay a single penny towards the Established Church, unless they chose to do it voluntarily, —to put it into the plate at church, or to subscribe it to some church charity.

My third point is, that every man shall be free to use such religious appliances as the State has to give him, or to let them alone. Now, every man and

woman in this room is perfectly aware that they have the right to go to church if they please, in their own parish, and nobody can hinder them; whilst, on the other hand, if they don't like, they can go to any other place of worship; or, if they prefer it, they need not go to any place of worship at all. They are perfectly free, without any interference from the Church or the State, to go or not to go to church just as they please. Well, you can't get nearer equality than that. My fourth test is, that if a man is not contented with the use that the State makes of those religious appliances which it has to offer to all the citizens of the country, he should have the right to change them. So he has. What in the world am I sent to Parliament for, or what do you send my friend Mr. Clare Read to Parliament for—if it is not to look after these things for you? If you Nonconformists are strong enough to say that the way in which the State deals with that great religious inheritance which it has inherited from the time of Alfred and before, does not please you, you have nothing to do but to set to work and elect men who will go and represent you and try and get these things changed. It is perfectly within your right to do this: and if you can do it, and if those other things which I have just been advancing are true—and I am certain that no man in this room is able to refute them—then I say so far as religious equality goes there is perfect religious equality, at this time, in this country.

I know the answer that will be made to me by my friends among the Nonconformists. They will say,

"How about the property; how about the endowments; you have been talking about disestablishment, but you have left out disendowment altogether." I have not left it out altogether; I am coming to it, and I hope to satisfy you—I don't know whether I shall satisfy my friend below there, but at any rate I intend to make very clear to him—what I myself think on this question of Church endowments.

The first question I wish to ask my Nonconformist friends, and I have no doubt my friend below is one of them, is this—Are they ready to take any part of the Church endowments? [SCURLL: "No."] No; that is precisely what I thought. I am not myself against it—I tell you plainly that I don't object to what is called concurrent endowment. I should not particularly object to it; I should not object if the revenues of the national Church were applied to the helping of other religious bodies which own allegiance to no earthly head outside the nation. That is my private opinion. It is one rather unusual. At any rate, it is one which is intensely unpopular with Nonconformists. What have they been doing? When the Tories a few years ago—I beg their pardon, I will say Conservatives if they like it better—when the Conservatives proposed a few years ago in Ireland what is called concurrent endowment, my Nonconformist friends in the House and in the country said, "No, no! whatever else we have we will not have concurrent endowment; not a bit of it." Consequently, concurrent endowment we did not have, and the first article of the creed of the Liberal party, especially of

the Nonconformist part of the Liberal party, is "No concurrent endowment, on any terms."

Well! No concurrent endowment! but how about this Church property and all these great endowments? You say you don't want them, you won't have any part of them. You say it is a great weakness to any religious body to have endowments; you say it is sure to make that body degenerate, and to make it weak, and not able to hold its own against independent bodies. All this is a great disadvantage, and you must feel that if there be any inequality the inequality is on the side of the Church. We are weighted with all these dreadful endowments, and how in the world we manage to bear them, and how it is that weighted as we are we yet manage on the whole to hold our own pretty well, is to me a perfect wonder.

But, however, I pass from this point, which I hope my Nonconformist friends will turn over, and just ask themselves, if they don't want these endowments themselves and would not have them at any price, whether it is better to leave them for religious uses, or better to turn them into the pockets of the landlords? [SCURLL: "Anywhere rather than the Church."] That is precisely the feeling. My friend does not feel that the work which we are all doing, which the Church is doing as well as the Nonconformist community to which he belongs, is all one and the same work,—that we are working in the same line though with different methods; and his hatred to the name of the Church is so strong that though he won't

have these endowments, and though he thinks that the Church may make use of them for religious purposes, yet he so dislikes the Church that he says, "Do anything else you like with them—throw them into the horse-pond, throw them into the river,—but don't let the Church have them."

The next argument of my Nonconformist friends—I have a great many amongst them and I have a great respect for them, for I think they have done a great deal of good in the country—their next argument is that these endowments and the Establishment extinguish the spiritual life of the Church. Do they? I know my friend there holds this belief strongly. Now, let me argue with him for a moment or two. What is the sign of the extinguishing of spiritual life? Well, the first way that spiritual life expresses itself is by the voice—by published works, by its speech. What, then, has been the speech of the national Church to the country? How do those belonging to it speak? What influence has it had on modern thought in this wonderful time in which we live? What contributions have the members given—I won't even say its members, but what contributions have its officers, the clergy, given—towards the activity of modern thought and the guidance of England in that wonderful labyrinth of difficult social and other questions which we have come upon in our day?

We will take the activity in literature. Let me mention a few names of men I have myself known—and my life is not a very long one—let me just

mention the activity I have known in men of my own personal acquaintance since I was a boy. There is no department of human thought in which such activity has been exhibited as in the study of history during that time. Let us look at the names which officers of the Church of England have contributed towards the history of this country and the development of historical knowledge. There are Milman, Merivale, Arnold, and Thirlwall, four great names among the modern historians of England, and all of them clergymen of the Established Church. Take moral philosophy and metaphysics, the highest subject on which human thought can work, and think of such men as Maurice, Mansell, Professor Grote, and Professor Whewell. Then in general literature, there is a name which should be very dear in this town, Dean Stanley. Look, again, at Canon Kingsley, who has lately thrown the whole of the cathedral machinery of Chester, so far as he has command of it, into the direction of, as he calls it, wedding science with the Church. Look at other names. There are Robertson, the two Hares, Canon Liddon, Bishop Temple, Professor Jowett, Mr. Ll. Davies, and I might name twenty others. I have named men from some of whom I differ much more than I do from my Nonconformist friends, but they are all Church clergymen whom I have known in my own life-time. So far, then, from the Establishment extinguishing spiritual life, precisely the contrary is true; and the very fact of being officers of that State Church which many of my friends hate so much, has just given a stimulus

and a freedom to those men which has led them to distinction in these different studies.

No one respects more than I do a great many of the Nonconformist ministers and leading men of Nonconformist bodies ; but try them by this test. You say that spiritual life, and that intellectual life, is extinguished by the State Church. What names of Nonconformists can you think of to put beside those fifteen or sixteen names that I took as the first I thought of in the Church of England. There is one great Nonconformist name that will occur to us all,—that of a native of Norwich, Mr. Martineau : but although there are many excellent writers and ministers among the Nonconformist bodies, there has not been one except Mr. Martineau who has contributed in the same measure as these Churchmen to all that new thought that has come flooding into religious matters, into historical matters, into metaphysics, into all branches of knowledge.

This leads me naturally on to the other side of the argument, as to that freedom which the Liberationists wish to bestow upon us. It is quite clear we don't want freedom in that direction ; that with all the gagging which the State must necessarily (according to their theories) put on the Church, the literature of the Church has been more powerful than that of any other portion of this British nation.

But we are to be set free in other respects. Now I hold that if we were not freer than any other portion of the community so far as religion is concerned, the result that I have stated could not have happened.

But I fancy that my Nonconformist friends would account for it in this way. They would say, "Yes, but you have had peculiar advantages ; you have had the Universities, which have not been open to us." And this was true until lately, so far as regards Oxford and Cambridge. But just remember that the Liberals, and amongst others a very large majority of Churchmen, have now thrown those Universities entirely open to you Nonconformists. Every intellectual advantage of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, as you know, is just as open to every Nonconformist who chooses to go and avail himself of them as they are to me.

Then, again, I say besides, that although, during that time, the Nonconformists have not had Oxford and Cambridge open to them, yet they have always had the University of London, which with its affiliated colleges is a great educational institution, and for all purposes is just as able to train men to take the lead in the intellectual activity of this country as the older Universities. But in any case, that objection has passed away now, for, as I say, all Nonconformists have been placed in precisely the same condition as Churchmen with respect to the culture of the Universities. ["Can a parish get rid of a clergyman?" frequently ejaculated by SCURLL.] If my very vigorous and excellent friend will merely let me go on my own way, I think he will probably find that I shall touch all the points on which he wishes to be instructed before the end of my talk.

Now, let me say that the reason by which I account

for this great difference between the intellectual activity in the highest regions of thought of the Church of England, and that of Nonconformist communities, is this—it is because the clergy of the Church are in a freer atmosphere, because the nation, which governs the Church of England, which has a special connection with the Church of England, is a far greater and freer body than any portion of it can possibly be. There is a very wise saying of a French statesman called Talleyrand, that “there is one person who is wiser than anybody, and that is everybody”—and it is the whole British nation as represented in the regular constitutional Government of the country which is responsible for, and which is connected with, the Church of England. And this I think is the reason why it is in a freer atmosphere, and is much more intellectually and spiritually active in my opinion, than those communities, of one of which I have no doubt my friend below is a very ardent and enthusiastic member.

Then the Liberal politician finds that the Church, as it stands now in our time, is the trustee for the nation of a great number of splendid buildings—cathedrals, churches in every parish, schools, and parsonages. In every parish it has got one of its own officers on duty, and buildings dedicated to religious purposes, which are open to every citizen, and to every man, who chooses to take advantage of them. And what do my Nonconformist friends propose the State should do with these? They propose that the State should toss that all over and have nothing whatever to do with it, and I, as a Liberal politician, don't intend, if I can

help it, to allow the State to make such a fool of itself. Mind you—and I speak as a Liberal—we are not asked by them to improve and adapt, but we are asked simply to destroy! I say it is not the part of a wise nation to do that.

Just to give an illustration of it: Suppose that this nation, hundreds of years ago, long before any of us were born, before any of us could have any exact evidence of how it had come about, became possessed of gas works: that ever since the State had owned those gas works: and that in every town and village of England gas was still carried to the door of every man. And suppose that a great number of bodies in this country were to rise up and say, "We object to this gas; we think that petroleum oil and tallow candles are much better things than gas, and we won't allow you (the State) to bring that gas (as you bring the services of the clergyman and the use of the parish church) to every man's door." He can, you see, use the gas if he pleases, or he can let it alone if he pleases, and yet my friends come and say, "Oh! but this is abominable tyranny; why should all these people have gas? We won't have it, so why should he? Pull down the gas works; let everybody light themselves by petroleum oil and tallow candles,—and let these old gas works, and all that belongs to them, be carted away and sold, and the money distributed in the relief of the rates, or anyhow you please." Would that be a reasonable contention? ["No, no," and ejaculations by Scurll, rendered inaudible by cries of "Turn him out."]

The SHERIFF (addressing Scurll) said—"I must beg of you to be silent. You are breaking your contract with the committee—"hear, hear"—for you were only admitted on a ticket pledging yourself to submit to the chair."

Mr. HUGHES continued—Well, if my friend does not like that illustration I will give him another. He may say that gas is a material thing, and that he would like an illustration from a learned profession. I will take then a profession which is most analogous to the profession of a clergyman, to the curing of souls. In every parish in England my friend and anybody who likes, whatever his religious opinions are, has a right to send for the parson of the parish: and the parson of the parish is bound to come and minister to him, and to cure all his spiritual ailments if he can. Suppose that the State from ancient times had endowments under which it kept a doctor in every parish, and by which it had command of all the great hospitals of the country. Now you know that there are a number of different schools of medicine in this country. At present the school of medicine which has the command of all the hospitals, and of the medical profession in this country, is what is called the allopathic system. I won't say whether I am an allopathist, but at any rate whether I am a nonconformist in this matter of medicine or not, there are a great many nonconformists who have something to say: homœopaths, hydropaths, mesmerists, and advocates of half-a-dozen other forms of disestablished medicine. Now, suppose that the State owned all the hospitals in

the country, and had a medical officer in every parish of the country, who was bound to minister to every man who chose to go to him, and the homœopathists were to say, "This will never do ; this is not medical equality ; let us pull down these hospitals ; we won't have these hospitals ; oh ! this connection between the State and the doctors is dreadful ; let us abolish all the hospitals ; down with them !" ["No."] But that is what the demand of the Nonconformists is. They say, "Let us abolish the Establishment altogether." Now, should you think it would be wise of the State, in case it had such appliances as these for the curing of the bodies of the people, to act upon the suggestion of the homœopathists and the hydropathists ? The case of the Church is precisely analogous. It is simply a question in the one case of the doctors of the body ; in the other case it is the doctors of the soul.

I think I have sufficiently explained what the Nonconformists want, and what the Liberation Society, if it had its way, would take away from the people of this country. As I say, the people of this country at present have a right in every parish to the parish church, have a right to the ministrations of the officer of religion ; they may use the church or not, as they like, and they need not send for the ministrations of the clergyman if they don't like. This is what they will have to give up if this disestablishment movement is successful.

Now, what do the Nonconformists propose to give them in exchange ? and this brings me to the proposals of the Liberationists as I understand them.

The first of their proposals is to adopt something like the Irish plan. The plan of disestablishment which has been adopted in Ireland, as you perfectly well know, has left the cathedrals, the parish churches, the manses, and a considerable portion of the endowments in the hands of the clergy and the present Synod of the Irish Church. Well, supposing that plan adopted here, every non-Churchman in the first place would be deprived of his birthright. My friend down there and the Nonconformists would have no longer any right to enter the parish church ; he would have no longer a right to the ministrations of any clergyman in the country ; he would have no right to any of those appliances to which he and his fathers have had a right ever since the nation was a nation. This many Englishmen perhaps would not object to very much, but as a Churchman and a politician I do object to any such course as that being adopted with regard to the English people.

For myself I say, that if the Church held together, as I sincerely trust it would, it would become far too powerful,—it would become an *imperium in imperio* that would be very dangerous to any civil government. No government that came into power would be able to stir hand or foot until it had made terms with the disestablished Church. We should have a disestablished Church whose roots were intertwined with the whole political and social life of the country, and whose power would be dangerous to the civil government. If it were to break up into sections—into two or three divisions—then we Churchmen in our turn should lose

our birthright. For we could not belong to more than one of the sections into which the Church was split up, and we should lose our right in two-thirds of the parish churches of England. The parish churches would belong to those sections of the Church and not to us, and we should no longer have the right which we inherited from our fathers to use those churches and to call upon the clergymen who serve in them to minister to us. Therefore, I object to disestablishment on this ground. Whether the Church remained together or broke up into sections, matters little to my mind. In either case the nation, and I, are losers.

Then, there is a second proposal which I don't think I need dwell upon, although it is far more consistent—that is, to sell the cathedrals and churches to the highest bidders, and apply the whole of the endowments to purely secular purposes. I quite feel that I need not dwell upon this subject here. I was talking it over with a thorough-going disestablishment man only the other day, in the House of Commons. I said, “What are you going to do with Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's?” He replied that in Westminster Abbey there were a great many monuments, and perhaps it was fit for a picture and sculpture gallery, whilst St. Paul's might be bought for a great auction mart. Are you prepared—is my friend below prepared—to go that length? Now, you have, I must say, the ugliest terminus that I ever saw to your railway in this town. Suppose that disestablishment had taken place, and the cathedrals were to be put up by public auction, and suppose the Great Eastern Railway

Company were to be the highest bidders for your cathedral : would you like to see them turn that building into a terminus for your railway ? I am quite sure you would not. You feel that the cathedrals and churches throughout the country have been used for 500 years for the highest possible purposes for which any buildings can be used in this world, and you would not have them degraded, any more than Churchmen would, to any purposes less high.

There is a third proposition, to throw the churches open to all religious communities. I should not object. But then comes in the trouble, that is nothing less than concurrent endowment, or just precisely the thing to which Nonconformist communities have pledged Parliament on no consideration whatever to consent. And, even supposing the churches and cathedrals were to be thrown open to all the religious communities of the country, you don't get out of the difficulty. There must be some hands to hold them,—some organisation to deal with them,—you cannot leave them there for the several congregations to fight over : for one to march in at one door, and another to march in at the opposite door. I see my friend is very reasonable ; he shakes his head ; he sees that this would be utterly impossible. What, then, is the only alternative ? It is, to arrange some hands in which they should be held ; and I think if you consider the matter you will find that they could not be held by anybody who would exercise that trust more fairly, or more for the good of the nation, than those to whom they are at present confided.

Again, amongst the other arguments which I should

wish to put before this meeting is this—that the certain tendency of religious communities not in connection with the State is, narrowness. What has kept the Church of England so broad as it is at present? I believe it is simply its connection with the State. [SCURLL: “We agree there.”] Exactly. My friend does not think it necessary to have a community broad. I think it desirable to have it as broad as possible. I should be glad to worship with my fellow Christian below (I don’t know what form he belongs to) because I am a State Churchman: but he, sitting there as a Nonconformist, I daresay would look three or four times before he would worship with me. I say that the breadth of the Church of England has been maintained by its connection with the State. Let me remind you of what has happened during our lifetime. You remember there have been three great crises in the English Church, and in each one of these some one party has risen up and striven to cast out another party from the Church. The first case was the celebrated case in which the late Bishop of Exeter, with the High Church party behind him, tried to cast out Mr. Gorham. They were unsuccessful. The case went before calm lawyers who were greatly bothered—there is nothing that judges so much dislike as to have ecclesiastical questions before them, but, when they are there, they bring trained intellects and calm minds, and all the wisdom that they have gained from long practice of their profession, to bear upon these questions,—and, as you remember, Mr. Gorham was not turned out. Then came the celebrated case of the

‘Essays and Reviews.’ In the same way a section of the Church rose up and said, “These men have been writing things contrary to the doctrine of the Church of England; let us cast them out.” But the State stepped in and said, “No no! they have been writing things which perhaps we cannot approve: they have been writing things which it may be difficult to reconcile with certain portions of the creeds of the Church of England: but still, as they can be interpreted in such a way as to be not clearly incompatible with those creeds, you shall not cast them out.” Then, what happened the other day? The time of trial came for the High Church party. There was the case against Mr. Bennett. The privy Council said, “We very much regret what this gentleman has written; we don’t think it at all right that a clergyman of the Church of England should have written these things; but we see that they can be interpreted in a way which is not necessarily incompatible with the doctrines of the Church of England.” Therefore, the State holds an equal and firm hand between all schools within the Church and says, “Gentlemen, your duty is to live together as Christian men, and not to be casting one another out of the inheritance of your fathers.” My friend down there evidently thinks this is a disgrace to the Church. [SCURLL: “I do.”] My friend says he does. But then, you see, if he thinks it is a great thing to be able to cast out the tares and to keep the wheat, he does not agree with the Author of our religion, or with the Apostles. They said that the tares and the wheat were to grow together until the harvest, and

that it was not for human judgment to go and root up those whom we please to call tares, and to tie them up in bundles to burn them, upon mere human judgment.

Let me now look for a moment at the different way in which these religious communities act. Without in the least wishing to throw any disparagement upon the body of which I am going to speak, I will take the broadest of the Nonconformist communities, the Independents. Their government is a self-elected and absolute committee. What has happened within the last few years? We all remember that two or three years ago the Rev. Mr. Brewin Grant was cast out of that Church for I don't really know what. But I will speak of a more recent case. There was the Rev. Mr. Webster, of Eckington, near Chesterfield, who had been a minister in the Independent Church for more than fifteen years. It appears that in this community there is the 'Congregational Year Book,' and that it is necessary that the names of all the ministers should appear in that book every year. He found in the year 1871 that his name had not been inserted among the ministers. He wrote to the editor of the 'Year Book' to ask why his name had not been returned, and the editor, the Rev. Mr. Ashton, made him no answer. Then he referred the editor to a bye-law of the society, imposing upon the editor the duty of informing the minister whose name was omitted. He got no answer. Then he wrote to the secretary of the Congregational Union. He got an answer, that if the secretary of the County Union

does not send the name in, no help can be given. Then he wrote to the secretary of the County Union, and he was told that the secretary of the County Union could give him no information. Then he made an application straight to the committee of the Congregational Union, and they expressed regret that they had no power to act. Thus the name of that clergyman was quietly shunted out by an irresponsible committee: and the consequence was, that without having the opportunity of defending himself, or having his case heard by any tribunal, he lost his share of the sick funds to which he had subscribed all those years: he lost the privilege of sending his children to school at a lower rate of payment, which every Independent clergyman has; he lost the advantage of the Pastor's Insurance Society to which he was also entitled; and I apprehend that by this time, in consequence of the disappearance of his name from the 'Congregational Year Book,' he is no longer a member of the Independent community.

Contrast the difference between this treatment of the ministers of one of the largest, and by far the most liberal (so far as I know) of the Nonconformist communities with the treatment which Church of England clergymen get! Therefore, I say again, the connection with the State makes the position of a clergyman much more free, much more independent, than that of the minister of any other religious community. I only cited that case just to prove this point. As a Liberal politician, I believe that the principle of exclusion is illiberal, and that the principle of inclusion is liberal.

The one is the idea of religious communities outside the Church; the other is the idea of the national Church; and I as a Liberal, intensely prefer the principle of the Established Church to that principle of selection and exclusion which is the principle of Nonconformist communities.

Again, there is another tendency of Nonconformist communities which I should be very sorry indeed to see come into the Church of England, and it seems to be quite inevitable in the case of communities not in connection with the State. That is the tendency to split up. The other day I read in a book of very considerable authority, that in the community of Baptists there are in England 550 congregations which are unattached, and which owe no allegiance to the central organisation. I don't know whether that is true—at any rate it is stated by those who write with some knowledge,—but I do know that in 'Guthrie's Conversations,' which is a work of authority in America, where the Baptists are much more extended than in England, there is the following list of sects into which the Baptists have split up:—Regular, Campbellites, Free-will Seventh Day, Six Principles Winnebrunnians, Anti-Mission Christians, Dunkers, and others. I should be very sorry indeed to see the chance of having the Church of England split up in that manner.

I will not only take the Baptists, but take the most recent of all Nonconformist communities, for which I have great respect—the Wesleyan community. You remember that John Wesley up to the end of his life

considered himself a *Churchman*. He said, "I have uniformly gone on for fifty years, never varying from the doctrine of the Church at all." But even in his time the Methodists had split up into three portions. Lady Huntingdon and Whitefield went off with the Calvinistic portion, another section went off with Ingham and Gambold, and then there was the Church section which remained with John and Charles Wesley. In the year 1795 there was a formal secession of the Methodists. Two years afterwards, in 1797, came the first split among them. The New Connexion was formed. [SCURLL: "They wanted freedom."] That was an attempt to get the lay members into the Conference. Then came 1810, when the Primitive Methodists went off on some question of preaching in the open air. [SCURLL: "Freedom again."] Now, if they had been of the Established Church connected with the State, the State would have said, "You Christians need not quarrel about these things; go and do your own work in your own way; you are perfectly at liberty to hold all these things within the pale of the Church." In 1815 the Bible Christians broke off, and then followed in 1835 the Wesleyan Methodist Association. And so you see within the first forty years of the disestablishment of Methodism, from the time they were released from State control, there were no less than five secessions and splits up. [SCURLL: "The result of freedom."] If my friend thinks it desirable to have no religious organisation throughout the country, and to have every community splitting up into a hundred different parts, of course he has a

perfect right to his opinion ; but I don't. There he and I entirely disagree.

Now, I daresay my friend down there has never looked into this part of the subject ; but I will ask—what have the greatest Nonconformists who have ever lived said on this question ? I have the greatest possible respect for Nonconformists now living, but as I have said, with one exception, there are no men of the first flight of intellectual greatness among the Nonconformists in England at the present time. But that was not the case 200 years ago, in the great days of Nonconformity ; and you shall hear what those men thought about Disestablishment and Disendowment. First, let us have Oliver Cromwell, whom all will allow to have been a pretty distinguished Nonconformist. There was no man more angry than he at the suggestion to split up the Church. He said, “Every man saith, ‘O ! give me liberty,’ but give it to him and (to his power) he will not yield it to anybody else. We are a people who have been unhinged these twelve years ; as if scattering, division, and confusion came upon us like things that we desired. These which are the greatest plagues that God ordinarily lays on nations for sin.” Oliver would not stand these splittings up. He appointed Triers, who went round to see that every Church was properly served, and that people did not split up and make divisions. The consequence was that a great number of Independent and Presbyterian ministers accepted livings in the Church of England as Nonconformist ministers. Let us come to John Bunyan, almost the

greatest of Nonconformists, and not far from the greatest of English writers. What does he say? "I would be, and hope I am, a Christian; but as for these factious titles of Anabaptists, Independents, Presbyterians, or the like, I conclude that they came not from Jerusalem or Antioch, but rather from hell and Babylon. For they naturally tend to divisions; you may know them by their fruits." Now comes another, one of the greatest and ablest of all Nonconformists, and almost of all Englishmen of his time. What does Matthew Henry say in his commentary on the 45th chapter of Ezekiel? "It is the duty of rulers to take care of religion, and to see that the duties of it be regularly and carefully performed by those under their charge. Let us give God praise for the national establishment of our religion with that of our peace and civil liberty." Then he says, "Christianity is twisted in with the very constitution of our Government." The time is getting late, and I will give you only one more quotation. This shall be of another eminent Nonconformist of that time — Dr. Owen, Cromwell's brother-in-law—whom all of you who study this question know to have been one of the leading men in the Long Parliament. A motion for disestablishment came on then, just like the motion which Mr. Miall is going to bring on next Friday in the House of Commons. Dr. Owen was one of the leaders of the religious party in the House of Commons at that time, and what does he say? "If it comes to this, and you say you have nothing to do with religion as the rulers of the nation, God will very soon have

nothing to do with you as rulers of the nation." Well, I hope that I have proved that in the very greatest time of the Nonconformists this idea of disestablishment, of severing all connection between the State and religion, had never occurred at all to the greatest and best of them. I quite admit that they wanted to put their Church over the State, and I am as happy they failed in that as I am happy that they succeeded in stopping others from severing the connection.

I am told by many Nonconformist friends, "It is very true what you say about the opinions of the old Nonconformists, and about our opinions now ; but you will please to understand it is not only we Nonconformists who cry out for disestablishment ; there is a large party in your own Church which is crying out for disestablishment." ["No, no."] I am glad to hear that in Norwich this is not so, and I hope it may not be true in other parts of the country. But if it be true that a portion of the Church of England is crying out for disestablishment, is it Liberal Churchmen, is it Broad Churchmen, is it men who want all authority to be obeyed, who wish the bishops to keep their dioceses in order, who wish to go on the old lines in which the Church of England has gone for 300 years ? It is not. The only portion of the Church within its pale who have made any efforts for its disestablishment are just those who won't obey the bishops—who want to break up the order of the Church, who want to do away with those things which we and our fathers have held to for 300 years, and who wish to introduce confession and a number of other things. [SCURLL :

“That’s it.”] My friend cries out “That’s it.” Well, is he prepared to go into alliance with them? [SCURLL: “No.”] But he must do, because they are the only persons in the Church who, like him, wish for its disestablishment. Now, I say that all State Churches are liberal, and that all voluntary Churches are illiberal. I will give you another proof of this. As you are aware, the Church of Rome, after a council which sat in Rome two or three years ago, have settled that the Pope is infallible. Who were those who supported the pretensions of the Pope to infallibility? Why, they were all the free Churches—the voluntary Churches. His great supporters were the voluntary Romish Church of England, the voluntary Romish Church of Ireland, the voluntary Romish Church of America. Archbishop Manning and all who follow him were the great advocates of Papal infallibility. Who were the persons who opposed it? The members of State Churches. The members of the State Church of Germany, the members of the State Church of Hungary, the members of the State Church of France. There never was a case in which the principle came out more clearly than in the most searching ordeal that has been before our generation—that question of the infallibility of the Pope, on which probably the very continuance of the great Romish Church, or heresy, which ever you please to call it, turned; and upon that question the great supporters of the Pope’s monstrous claims were the three voluntary Churches, and his great opponents were the three State Churches.

In conclusion, I will just say a few words to my friends the Nonconformists and to my friends who sit around me, and who have invited me down here. I would say to the Nonconformists, that I hold their work has been necessary, has been of immense value to the religious life of this country, and that it is likely to be necessary in the future. I also hold that they have every right to the position which they occupy, and I sincerely trust they may maintain it, but I wish they would maintain it inside the Church instead of outside. Let me remind my friends of one or two facts. Before the Act of Uniformity there were Nonconforming members of the Church of England. In the year 1602 who was it carried the Millenary petition to King James I.? Why 800 Nonconforming ministers of the Church of England. As I have told you, Oliver Cromwell put into churches numbers of men who were Nonconformists, and who did not accept the doctrines of the Church of England. There is not the least reason why they should not now pursue their own views, desiring and preferring their voluntary organisation to that of the Established Church : but why should they not accept openly what they cannot help, because they are Nonconforming members of the Church of England, whether they like it or not? Why should they not say, "As we cannot get out of you, we will reform you. There are many ways in which we should like you to reform. We will join all your own best men in helping to reform that Church which has been handed down to us for a thousand years, and make it a noble

temple in which all Christians in this country who are willing to acknowledge no supremacy outside the country may join in one great body."

To my friends the Churchmen, who I suppose are the great majority in this room, I will just say a very few words. If disestablishment is to come in this country it will be very much your own fault. I hear some people say that the day of our visitation has come, and is past. I should be very sorry indeed to believe it, and I believe it would be a very sad day for England if that were true. But in order that it may never come, I trust that Churchmen will remember that this struggle is not to be carried on by any kind of intemperance, or of intolerance, or of narrowness. We should remember that truth is many sided ; that all truth comes from one source. There is only one sun in the heavens, yet, as you know, there are many beautiful colours, all which come from the one sun. You cannot say that the red is better and truer than the blue, or that the blue is better and truer than the yellow. You may prefer one to the other ; you may see that one colour is more universal, more applicable for different purposes than another, but there is truth in each. In the same way there is only one earth, but there are a great many different trees which grow out of it, and which derive their nourishment from it : and although the oak may be very much better suited to England and the fir to Norway, yet we admit that there is truth in each ; that one is just as good and true a tree as the other. Therefore, let us who are apt to think in the Church

and other religious communities that we have got all the truth ourselves, remember that truth is wider than can be comprehended by any body of human beings, and let us be tolerant to one another, not forgetting that those who are not in the same community with us hold their side of the truth as strongly as we do ours.

Each religious community has witnessed, and is witnessing, to some side of the truth. Religious communities are not perfect in themselves like trees or flowers, but for that very reason it is all the more necessary that the members of them should be tolerant, and should make the greatest effort to understand those of other religious beliefs. If our Church, as I hold and as I believe, is the broadest, and therefore in that sense the truest and greatest of those communities, if it be a catholic body, it can do two things. It can, in the first place, concede more easily than other bodies, and in the next it can assimilate better. And I say that the duty of Churchmen in this day of ours is, to concede everything that can be fairly conceded to other religious communities. We Churchmen are very fond of resisting every change, however small it be, on the old unwise pretence of not letting in the thin end of the wedge. Now let me read to you an extract from one whom you will all admit, whether you agree with him or not, to be a great statesman, and whose name will be honoured in any assembly of living Englishmen. I am going to quote to you from Lord Russell's 'History of the Christian Religion,' p. 185. It is the wisest sentence

in the whole book. "There is no doubt that concession gives rise to demands for fresh concession,—[‘Hear, hear’ from the platform]—and it is right that it should be so." [Laughter.] Then comes the point to which I wish specially to call the attention of my friends behind:—"The true limit is, that all it is just to concede should be conceded; all that it is true to affirm should be affirmed; but that which is unjust should be rejected, and that which is false should be denied." Besides this power of concession, which she has in a much greater degree than any other religious body, the Church, if she be a catholic Church, as she pretends to be, has also greater power of assimilation. Let her not be afraid of those sides of the truth which have been most prominently put forward by other religious communities. She can assimilate them if she pleases, and it is her duty to assimilate whatever is true in them. Her mission in this world is not to hold her own in the sense of resisting all reform, of resisting all concession, but her duty and mission is to go to the lost people of our country, and of every country where she is established or where she exists, and to draw those together into her fold who cannot get into that of other religious bodies, which have such limits as I have been speaking of to bar the gates of admission. Her great mission is to seek and save those which are lost in every community. The highest title of her ministers is *Servi servorum Dei* (the servants of the servants of God), and, if she remembers this high mission, if she endeavours by her life to exemplify her Master's Spirit and to

illustrate His life, she never need be afraid in this country, or in any other country, of disestablishment or disendowment. What did the greatest of Churchmen who ever lived say on the point of people carrying on those miserable squabbles that are dividing us in this day? They were saying, "We are of Paul," "We are of Apollos," "We are of Peter," and he said, "Who is Paul? Who is Apollos? Who is Peter?" If you only understand what an inheritance you are called to, "all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Peter, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

IV.

THE CONDITION AND PROSPECTS OF
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

(Delivered at Sion College, March 18th, 1877.)

I THINK that many of those whom I am about to address in this college on the condition and prospects of our national Church, may very probably be asking themselves at this moment what possible claim I can have to do so, or what possible good can come of anything I may say. I, at any rate, very readily admit that such questions would be most reasonable, so perhaps a few preliminary words of explanation may not be out of place.

It was some months ago, before the late occurrences at Hatcham and all that has followed on them, that the proposal was made to me. Even then I had serious doubt as to accepting, and ultimately did so with some reluctance. The doubt arose from a genuine belief that I had much more to learn from than to teach the members of Sion College on such a subject. It is true that I had been asked to speak or lecture on the Church question at Birmingham, Norwich, and elsewhere ; but those addresses were

delivered to popular audiences, to whom I had been asked to speak as a politician, and at times when this great controversy was in a very different phase. But in this place I knew that I should be addressing an audience of experts, the metropolitan representatives of the great profession (or "calling," to use the better word) of ordained ministers of the national Church—a very different and much more serious matter. Hence my doubt.

My reluctance arose from a dislike to stir still waters, and raise discussion upon grave matters at a time when there seemed no pressing need for action or decision with regard to them. And I own that the earlier part of the past year appeared to me to bear many signs of such a time; for the usual motions, pointing to a severance of Church and State, or to reconstruction or reform of one kind or another, had not been made in the House of Commons. In the addresses of members and candidates to constituencies last autumn, when reference was made to the Church question, it was generally treated as a kind of neutral territory in politics, even advanced Liberals, like Mr. Leonard Courtney, declaring, that though they were theoretically in favour of the entire severance of Church and State when the proper time might come, yet they saw no sign of its coming, and deprecated any attempt to force it. On the other hand, one most important Church reform, the full meaning of which has never been popularly appreciated,—I mean the subdivision of dioceses and the appointment of suffragan bishops who should not

be peers of Parliament,—had made great progress, almost without opposition from the nonconforming bodies or the Liberation Society. Thus far the time seemed one for letting well alone: and I should certainly have desired to do so then, but for the smouldering discontent already too apparent in one extreme wing of the national clergy. In view of this, however, it seemed to me possibly worth while to put forward at Sion College a lay view of the matters which were causing such discontent amongst a section of Churchmen. So with this view I overcame my reluctance, never dreaming that before I should address you here, this smouldering fire would have burst into a blaze; that we should have, on the one hand, the Church Union publicly denying the right of the nation to control the clergy, and clergymen declaring that they “will labour night and day to set the Church of England free from a persecuting State;” on the other hand, the Liberationists, reassured at hearing their own war-cries issuing from within what they are used to regard as the hostile camp, openly preparing for a campaign which they seem to think may be the final one.

Had I been able to foresee such a state of things, I candidly confess that I should have declined this invitation. The prospect is to me altogether too sad and too confusing, and the issues are at present so undefined, and the forces on either side so undeveloped, that I would very gladly have been silent, at any rate till I could see more clearly how the great controversy was shaping itself, and what it behoved

one to say or do in this matter, who looks upon the connection of Church and State—of the spiritual and temporal life of the nation, as it exists, and has existed in England ever since we were a nation—as a part of our national inheritance which it would be a grievous misfortune, and an irreparable misfortune, to lose.

I am here, however, to speak to you on the subject, and must do so to the best of my ability, glad at any rate that you will hear the views, frankly expressed, of what I believe to be a much larger proportion than is generally supposed of ordinary English Churchmen—laymen who have no strong bias for or against any party in the Church; who have neither time nor taste for the lamentable party wrestling-matches got up by the (so-called) religious press and societies, but only desire to use themselves in peace, and to hand down to their children, the opportunities for Christian worship and Christian living, which have served their forefathers for so many generations, improved and reformed to suit the needs of a new time, but still an inalienable part of the birthright of every English child. I repeat that I believe,—and, as one who has had much intercourse with all classes of our society, and has for years been much exercised by this question, have good grounds for my belief,—that this class is a far larger one than is commonly allowed. And it would be a great mistake to suppose, because they make no strife or fuss about their religion, that they do not really care about it. It is often assumed, nowadays, that the bulk of our Church

laity are mere formalists, supporting religion because they believe the parson to be the most powerful kind of policeman ; and ready to welcome whatever form of new worship, or no-worship, may come next, when criticism and science shall have dealt finally with the supernatural and Christianity, so long only as some form or other be left to keep the common folk in order, and their own wives and children quiet. On the contrary, we (for I must rank myself in their number) are thoroughly satisfied that Christianity is in no more real danger now than it was a hundred and fifty years ago, when Dean Swift, and many other greater wits than we have amongst us nowadays, thought and said that it was doomed. We hold in perfect good faith, that the good news our Lord brought is the best the world will ever hear ; that there has been a revelation in the Man Jesus Christ, of God the Creator of the world as our Father, so that the humblest and poorest man can know God for all purposes for which men need to know Him in this life, and can have His help in becoming like Him, the business for which they were sent into it : and that there will be no other revelation, though this one will be, through all time, unfolding to men more and more of its unspeakable depth, and glory, and beauty, in external nature, in human society, in individual men. That, I believe to be a fair statement of the positive religious belief of average Englishmen, if they had to think it out and to put it in words ; and all who hold it must of course look upon Christ's Gospel as the great purifying, reforming, redeeming power in the

world, and desire that it shall be free to work in their own country on the most favourable conditions which can be found for it.

On the other hand, there are a number of matters which have been commonly insisted upon in England as part of Christianity, as to many of which the kind of Englishmen I am speaking of have come to have no belief at all, one way or the other. They have no time to spare for such subjects, and do not feel it needful for their higher life that they should make up their minds, for instance, as to the exact quality of the inspiration of Scripture, the origin of evil, the method of the Atonement, the nature and effect of sacraments, justification, conversion, and other much-debated matters. As to another class of ecclesiastical subjects, such as apostolical succession, and all the priestly and mediatorial claims which are founded on it, they have indeed made up their minds thoroughly, and believe them to be men's fables, mischievous and misleading to those who teach and those who learn—to priests and people alike.

Probably many of my hearers will consider such a belief as this too vague to be of any practical value; but at any rate, as a fact, there it is, and it has to be acknowledged and accounted with as a fact in dealing with this Church question. And, as a rule, while it hinders those who hold it from attaching any exaggerated or superstitious importance to one form or another of Church organisation, it inclines them to respect and value that which they find to have been thought out and beaten out by successive generations,

and to have brought the nation safely at least, and not without honour, so far. Such a man is therefore generally an attached, though not an enthusiastic national Churchman, and in the main for the following reasons :—

First, the historical. Our time is not one in which any institution is able to stand on its pedigree only : but it is also one in which we are bound to be specially careful of any wholesome links which bind us to the past, and make our history one of steady and connected life and progress. And from this point of view the national Church is beyond all question the most venerable of our institutions, and as intimately bound up with the national life as the monarchy or the Houses of Parliament. The latest and best historian of the Conquest describes the England of 1066 as “a land where the Church and nation were but different names for the same community ; a land where priests and prelates were subject to the law like other men ; a land where the king and the witan gave away the staff of the bishop ;” adding that “such a land was more dangerous in the eyes of Rome than one of Jews or Saracens.”

And through the long four hundred years' struggle with the Papacy, the same description holds good ; and in every great crisis the Church and nation has held together as one community. When à Becket backed the Pope's claim to make Church courts supreme over the clergy, and to exempt them from the national tribunals, the king answered by the Constitutions of Clarendon, which declared the Church

to be part and parcel of the nation, and the clergy amenable to the civil law like all other citizens ; and those Constitutions were supported by clergy and laity alike.

When the King, backed by the Pope, refused the demands of the nation for the Great Charter, it was Archbishop Langton who headed the barons. Two of the three sureties to whom John was bound for its fulfilment were bishops, and the first nine names are those of Church dignitaries. Again and again the identity of the Church of England with the nation was upheld ; sometimes by bishops, as when Robert Grostete flatly refused to institute Innocent IV.'s Genoese nominee to an English benefice ; sometimes by the King or his courts of law, as when the King's Bench outlawed the members of the assembly of clergy, who had come together without the King's writ, and, in deference to a Papal Bull, produced by Archbishop Winchelsea, refused to grant a subsidy to Edward I. for his Scotch campaign. The statutes of mortmain, of provisors, of prohibition, of *præmunire*, all aimed at some encroachment of Rome on the national character of the English Church, were all passed with the assent and by the help of that Church which, by its very divisions in such crises, proved its national character. It is not necessary to follow the history since the Reformation, for it is part of the case of those of the clergy who seek to sever the connection that it has existed in full force from that time, Even when episcopacy was abolished during the Commonwealth and Protectorate, the national principle was

upheld, and the established Presbyterian Church was even more intimately allied with the State than its predecessor had been. Cromwell had no more thought of severing the connection than Edward or Henry, but desired to make the Church as broad and tolerant as possible.

And so the Church has continued to our own day in theory, and still is to a very great extent in fact, the nation organized for spiritual purposes, and in striking sympathy with and faithfully mirroring the nation in all its varying moods—at times no doubt persecuting, apathetic, unfaithful—but on the whole faithful to her great mission, and exercising a noble and purifying influence on the national conscience and the national life.

If this is at all a true view of the history of the Church of England, the fallacy of the main argument of the English Church Union at recent meetings becomes clear. Appeal is made to some supposed compact between the State and the Church, and it is contended that the Church never conceded to the State the right of control in spiritual matters when that compact was made. This assumes that the State and the Church in England were at some time two distinct corporate bodies, in part at least composed of different persons, and capable of contracting with one another. But there never was such a time in England; State and Church never stood in such relations to each other; there never was any such formal contract between them as the Church Union argument starts from. Between the officers of the Church for the time being and the State, there can of course be, and

always has been, a contract of service, as there is between the officers of the army and the State. But it is placing matters on a false issue to represent the Church of England as a power bound by treaty or compact with the State of England for certain definite purposes, and competent to annul that treaty when she pleases. A Church with the pretensions of Rome, or a voluntary Church, such as the Methodists, if the nation were to come to them now to make terms, might assume such an attitude and make such claims, but they contradict the very idea of our national Church, as those words have always been understood in England.

Before quitting the historical ground I would just remind you that this modern cry for disestablishment, or the absolute severance of the State from religion, has really no English tradition at all behind it, at any rate since the Long Parliament. In that celebrated assembly it was indeed mooted, but with no success. Dr. Owen, the brother-in-law of Cromwell, and a famous Nonconformist minister, was its most vigorous opponent, and evidently expressed the sense of the House and the country when he protested in the most solemn and earnest words against the notion that they, as rulers of the nation, had nothing to do with religion. From that time to our own the effort has never been repeated, while the greatest names amongst the Nonconformists may be cited as supporters of the direct and avowed connection of the State with religion. Thus Matthew Henry thanks God "for the national establishment of our religion

with that of our peace and civil liberty," and Bunyan, Wesley, Baxter, may all be quoted on the same side. Even the leading Nonconformists and reformers of the very last generation had no such policy. Mr. Grote, who may be taken as their representative man on this question, in the first Reformed Parliament, advocated indeed sweeping and stringent reforms within the Church, but, so far as I am aware, never hinted at severing the connection between the Church and the civil government. I need not say that the cry from within the Church herself for this divorce is of even more recent origin.

It may of course be replied to all this, that however strong the historical argument may be, it is after all mainly a sentimental one, which can be allowed little weight in the changed and changing conditions and aims of our time. And I would not press it beyond this, that if thirty generations of Englishmen, who have given us our country as we enjoy it, have insisted on a national profession of Christianity by the State, those who now oppose it shall at least give us some grounds for believing that the nation will become nobler and better for renouncing that profession.

The second reason for which such men as I am speaking of value the connection, may also possibly be called a sentimental one, but has I believe a very important practical side to it. It is that that connection is a constant and powerful protest against the desire and effort to divide human life sharply into two parts, one of which is concerned with the visible, and the other with the invisible: or, as the commoner

phrase goes, one with secular, the other with religious affairs. Notwithstanding the experience of many failures, that desire and effort were never more active than in our time. And, however firmly convinced we may be from the experience of our own lives, and from our observation of all that is going on around us, that no such severance is possible,—that the two realms will assert their interdependence sooner or later, whatever rules we may lay down for keeping them apart,—still the mere attempt to sever them will always work mischief, and we cannot afford to part, or to tamper with, any witness that they have been joined together from the beginning of time, and will remain so joined to the end, by a law which man cannot set aside. And the connection of Church and State is a standing witness to this law in the highest places, a protest against the notion that the nation can repudiate its highest functions and duties, any more than one of its own citizens can do so. Were the present connection severed, the only result would be, that, sooner or later—probably after much national deterioration and humiliation—the law would have to be reasserted, and the duty accepted again by the nation under new conditions. Therefore, those in whom the love of their country is deepest and strongest, should be foremost in insisting that we shall not give up the highest national ideal because we find it hard to realize.

It is scarcely possible to contend that that ideal is not lowered by severance of the connection. An abandonment of important functions may be ex-

pedient, or convenient, or even necessary, but it must remain a proof of a more stunted and narrower life. And, without dwelling on the many ways in which such an abandonment might probably act in England, I think no one will deny that, in any case, it is certain to lessen the interest which religious men take in politics and public life. There is, I know, a school of politicians, not wanting influential representatives in the press, who will exclaim at once, "What a blessing! How smoothly public business would run on in future if we could only get rid of them altogether! They are the bane of public life, at least, just so far as they will insist on bringing religious considerations to bear on it. A nation to be great and prosperous can't afford to keep a religious conscience." But I venture to think notwithstanding, from all I have seen of public life in England, that precisely the contrary is true, that men who are avowedly religious are the best politicians, and that it is of the highest moment for the national character, and therefore in the end for national prosperity, that they should be kept interested in politics. It is not easy to do this now, and I am at a loss to see how it will become easier when we declare that henceforth the nation will take no cognizance of, and will cease in its corporate capacity to have anything to do with, religion. If it is replied by some sections of Liberationists (as I presume some at least of the nonconforming bodies would reply) that this is not their meaning—that they never intended to bring about such a result, and they do not believe that disestablishment will effect it—I

can only ask, how they propose to avert it? By what machinery can the national supervision and control of religion be made less irksome to them than the present arrangement?

Again, such a man finds himself born to a certain religious inheritance as an Englishman. He can go and settle in any remotest hamlet of this island of ours, and there he shall find provided for him and his family a public place of worship, an officer of the State, and all the machinery necessary for enabling him to enjoy every office and ministration of religion, if, and so far only as, he desires them. This, I say, is part of his and of my birthright, and of every man's birthright as an Englishman, in this year 1877. I have the right to all these things, not because I hold any particular religious opinions, but simply because I am an Englishman, and claim them. If I am too poor or too miserly to pay for them, I can claim them without payment.

Now, to put it no higher, this particular portion of our birthright can do us no harm, for this if for no other reason, that we need not use it unless we please. If we do not want to worship God ourselves, or to be baptized, married, buried, consoled, aided, instructed—if we want none of these things for our wives and children—there is no compulsion whatever upon us in the matter. It is not easy, therefore, to see how we or our families can be injured by this option, and by no means clear how any one else can be.

Again, another reason why such men as I am trying to describe are attached to and desire to main-

tain the connection between Church and State, as the religious condition of things most favourable to national life, is that they see that the principle which underlies the National Church is inclusiveness. Every Englishman born is assumed to be a member, and continues to be so without question, until he leaves it by his own act, of his own free will. Whereas the principle which underlies all voluntary churches is exclusiveness—they are essentially a section gleaned out of the nation ; and whereas an Englishman cannot get out of the national, he cannot get into any voluntary Church, without an effort of will. It follows, or at any rate is the fact, that the national Church is the most liberal in spirit ; for by its very nature and constitution it is bound to protest against the sectarian spirit, the spirit of division. Whenever the National Church is not bearing this protest faithfully, it is untrue to itself. The wide divergences of opinion allowed within its ranks, so triumphantly cited in some quarters as signs of weakness, seem to such men proofs of strength.

They see also that the national is the only organisation by which the Gospel can be carried to the very poor and the outcasts—to those, in short who need it most, but who do not value it, and cannot or will not pay for it. For voluntary Churches cannot live in the poorest districts, but must follow those who can maintain them, and are only bound to minister to these.

They see, lastly, that the National Church is best adapted to the tone and circumstances of the people of England, as is proved by the fact that the voluntary

Churches are all imitating her in so many ways—by using more and more of her Liturgy, by copying her architecture and music, till it is often difficult to tell as you pass a place of worship whether it is national or Nonconformist—by even adopting for their ministers the titles by which the national clergy have always been distinguished.

I have had to dwell at some length, though I trust so as not to weary you, on the sort of views which are held by a large number of quiet lay Churchmen who think about such subjects at all. And now, if there be the least ground of truth in my picture, if I am not dreaming when I say that such men are numerous in England, I would ask any clergyman here to try to put himself in the place of such a layman, and consider how he would regard the doings of the last few months within the Church, and the position which a section of the clergy are taking up and the language they are using—I say a section of the *clergy*, not meaning for a moment to deny that they have a following of laymen (not really so numerous as they suppose, but genuine as far as it goes) with them, but only to place the burthen on the right back. No laity would be there but for them. It is idle to talk of offences coming mainly from the newly aroused zeal of boys and girls. It is a section of the national clergy who are responsible, and must answer for, the present state of things, be it for good or for evil.

Now this extreme section are deliberately breaking the law, and, to our astonishment, are applauded and upheld in doing so, not only by newspapers and

unions from which nothing better could be expected, but by considerable numbers of their brethren upon whom we had been accustomed to look with respect as honest and faithful ministers, however much we might differ from them. They do not indeed pretend to agree with the extreme Ritualists, but they support them openly and warmly, on the plea that they are suffering for conscience sake. Well, let the plea pass—admit that they are making these things matters of conscience—but we must be allowed to ask, as Englishmen, whether this is the kind of conscience which we desire to cultivate in ourselves, or to see cultivated in this nation. Poor conscience! to what pitiful uses is that sacred name turned! The stolid Essex peasant, one of the Peculiar People, lets his child die because he will not allow it to take medicine, and believes himself to be suffering for conscience sake because he is summoned before a magistrate to answer for its life. And he has far more reason on his side than these Ritualist martyrs. I desire neither to speak nor think scornfully or bitterly of them, but this at least I must say, that men who can make matters of conscience of such trivialities as the shape and colour of vestments, the burning of candles and incense, the position of tables, and the like, and in defence of these things are prepared to defy authority, and break what they know to be the law of their country, are not fit to be trusted with the spiritual guidance of any portion of our people. This nation has a great work still to do in the world, for which she needs children with quite other kind of consciences

than these—consciences which shall be simple, manly, obedient, qualities which must disappear under such examples and teaching as these men are giving. It is with reluctance that one has to come to such a conclusion, but there is no use in blinding ourselves any longer as to their meaning. They have resolved to try their strength with the nation; to throw off all civil control as well as to disobey and defy their spiritual superiors: and they will have to abide the consequences, which will assuredly be that they will not be allowed to minister any longer in that National Church, which they are doing all they can to destroy.

Were it only a question of these extreme men, there would be small cause for anxiety, but, as already stated, they have been backed—at any rate, ever since the judgment in the Hatcham case—by a large number of High Church clergy from whom we had a right to look for very different things. I have heard friends of my own speaking of these men as martyrs, and echoing the clap-trap cries of the (so-called) religious press, such as that of “The interference of the State with the Church has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished.” A martyr I have always understood to be one who suffers willingly, for his faith. It is abusing an almost sacred word to apply it to such suffering as is possible here in England nowadays for any opinion (I will not speak of faith) about what postures of the body, or shape or colour of garments, have been in use in churches since Edward the Sixth’s time. And as to interference of the State having increased, it is notoriously untrue in

any sense except that offences against the law have increased, and so that law has had to be (with extreme reluctance) enforced by the heads of the Church against the offenders.

I willingly admit, however, that they have more reasonable arguments than these. They urge, for instance, that (apart from the extreme Ritualists, whose proceedings they do not approve) they have been the moving power of the great Church revival of our time, the evidences of which lie broadcast over the whole country, in restored cathedrals and churches, frequent and reverent services, and the widespread zeal for all social reform and philanthropic effort, which has become the honourable and distinguishing characteristic of the nation in our day. In return for these services they have met with abuse, distrust, misrepresentation: and now at last are the subjects of direct attack on the part of the nation, both in the Law Courts and in Parliament, the crowning act of aggression being the Public Worship Regulation Act which has been aimed at them, and at them only.

Now even those who distrust the High Church party most, must admit their plea as to the zealous, and in many respects admirable, work which they have done since the revival begun by the 'Tracts for the Times' forty years ago. They have deserved well of the nation in many ways, and have possibly some grounds for their complaints as to the suspicion with which they have, no doubt, been always regarded, though they have certainly taken no pains to avoid it. But it is impossible to admit that they have any

reason to complain of harsh or unjust treatment, either from the national executive, or from the legislature. The judgment in Mr. Bennett's case shows how far the Law Courts have been disposed to go in construing their obligations in the largest and widest sense. It is only when there has been an obvious and scandalous disregard and defiance of the law (as in the case of Mr. Purchas and Mr. Tooth) that it has been enforced against any of their number. Indeed, another proof of the advantage of the national principle may be found in the reluctance with which the courts have intervened; and the steadiness with which they have upheld the principle of a large toleration and inclusiveness in the face of strong popular excitement.

Again, as respects the legislature: so far from showing any readiness or eagerness to follow the popular cry, it has been only when the open defiance of the law had become a public scandal that Parliament could be induced to interfere at all, and then by an Act which I venture to think has been greatly misunderstood and misrepresented.

Let me just remind you of a fact or two with respect to this Act. In the first place, remember it was a Church measure. Whereas the custom had prevailed for years, until it had almost become a rule, that such Bills should be introduced by the government of the day in consultation with the bishops, this bill was not a government measure. I have never heard why it was that the rule was broken, but broken it was, and it was not until after the Bill had

passed the Lords, and been debated for three long nights in the Commons, that it was at length adopted by the Government.

It was introduced by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and received the general support of the whole bench, though the Bishops of Lincoln and Oxford took some objections to small matters of detail.

At the end of the long and able debate in the Commons, the feeling of the House, and of the nation, had been so clearly expressed that the second reading was carried without a division.

I scarcely remember a question which has stirred the House or the country more deeply in the last twenty years. It was discussed all over the country, in meetings held chiefly, I believe, under the auspices of the Church Association and the Church Union (as to which bodies the Bishop of Lichfield has to my mind well said, that there will be no peace in the Church till they cease to exist). I would only ask any fair man who is inclined to join in the attempt to take the Church from under state control, to compare the speeches in Parliament and those of the members of these ecclesiastical organisations, during the spring and summer of 1874, and then say which yoke (as the phrase goes) he would honestly desire to be under.

As for the Act itself, it was well said by Mr. Goschen—himself I believe a High Churchman—that it would prove either a small or a large measure ; a small one if the clergy meant to obey it, otherwise most likely a large and searching one.

By its provisions the clergy of every school are

protected against any malicious or arbitrary use of the Act, by the interposition of the chief of their own body in the diocese in which it is sought to put it in motion, whose leave must be obtained before the institution of proceedings. The bishop practically becomes an arbiter in the case, if both parties are willing to accept him : if not, an impartial tribunal is provided for the decision of the questions at issue.

I trust there are even yet hopes that it may prove a small act, for I cannot believe that, in spite of all goading of the religious press, and of the semi-ecclesiastical societies, a body of high-principled English gentlemen will continue to maintain the attitude of defiance to the law, and to the clearly expressed will of the nation.

The often repeated cry that the Act is one-sided, and aimed against one party only in the Church, may serve the purpose of excited speakers, but will not bear examination. For it makes no alteration in the law, but only simplifies and cheapens the processes by which the law is administered. Whatever was lawful in the fabric or arrangement of consecrated buildings, or in vestments, postures, or decorations, remains still lawful—whatever was required before the passing of the Act is still required, the neglect to use that which is prescribed standing in precisely the same category as the use of that which is forbidden.

If it be one-sided, every efficient law in the Statute Book is one-sided, for every such law inflicts penalties, not on those who keep within, but on those who break it.

The objection to the constitution of the Court which takes cognizance of these offences, when the parties will not submit to the bishop, can scarcely be regarded as serious. It is said that the authority of this Court "is not derived from the rightful royal supremacy exercised 'under God,' but of the Sovereign in council by authority of Parliament." But surely those who make this protest are aware that the Queen has no authority by virtue of her mere supremacy to constitute any court apart from Parliament.

On the whole, it is not easy to see how, if order is to be preserved, and the law enforced at all in the National Church, any more moderate or fair method could have been found than that adopted by the Act in question.

But let us pass from the late Act to the remedies for the present state of things, which have been suggested by those who are taking part in this agitation. These are not at present very definite. They are indeed vaguely pledging themselves to "work night and day to set the Church of England free from a persecuting State;" but we are not told with any distinctness, what they desire to substitute for the yoke of the nation. If the words of some of their number are to be taken literally, it would seem as though our history of seven hundred years had been rolled back, and that England is again face to face with the monks who followed à Becket in his attempt to sever the clergy from the nation, and set them up as a caste outside and above the law of the land. I do not of course mean that the present contention is that

the clergy shall not be amenable to the law for civil offences, like all other citizens ; but apparently there *is* a section of them who do claim, that as regards all matters connected with their position and functions as clergy, they shall be subject to Church courts only. And by Church courts they cannot mean any courts constituted in our national manner, and under the jurisdiction of Parliament ; for then their grievance comes to nothing. It is reduced to a mere question of names, and it does not matter a straw by what name the Courts which try ecclesiastical causes are known, if they are constituted, and their judges appointed, by the head of the State, on the advice of responsible Ministers, and under the control of Parliament. One is driven therefore to the conclusion that they mean a tribunal independent of State control, the judges of which are elected by, and responsible to, the clergy, or some purely ecclesiastical organisation. There was some strength and meaning in à Becket's proposal, because he had the Pope to put in the place of King and King's Council, as the head and fountain of authority for the Courts which he proposed to substitute for the national Courts. But, as the Ritualists have not that resource, they should either cease beating about the bush and make their demands clear and precise, telling us who is to be the fountain on earth of ecclesiastical authority, or leave the national Church, and set up a sect of their own, in which they may place themselves as priests in whatever position they please, as they find themselves unable to accept the grandest of all positions, that of

simple citizens, called and appointed to minister to the nation, whose sons they are, in spiritual things.

There is another course advocated by many High Churchmen as an escape from our present difficulties, which is advanced temperately and reasonably, and has the public sanction of at least one bishop. I think I shall state it most fairly perhaps in his words: "I am of opinion," the Bishop of Lincoln writes, "that for the sake of the State, as well as for that of the Church, much more liberty ought to be given, and much more weight attached, to the judgment of the spirituality in ecclesiastical causes, and to the action of the Church of England in her synods, diocesan and provincial." I am glad to be able to quote his further words of warning: "But we shall never obtain those benefits by violent resistance to constitutional authority; on the contrary, we shall provoke violent reprisals, and shall greatly injure the cause we desire to maintain."

I presume that these words point to investing Convocation with some legislative powers in ecclesiastical affairs; and with every desire to concede whatever can be conceded for the sake of peace, I am bound to say plainly that I do not think it can be found in this direction. Convocation has now for some years been sitting, and discussing all questions upon which legislation is needed, or which seriously affect the religious condition of the nation. But I fear that the reports of the debates in both Houses have not had a reassuring effect on the country; indeed, they have been characterised by timidity and narrow-

ness, and an apparent want of appreciation of the forces which are working in the outside world, which has disappointed those who looked most hopefully towards this experiment. I am not aware of any recommendation of practical value which has as yet come from that body. Indeed, it seems to me, that the main result of the recent revival of Convocation has been, to strengthen the convictions of all those who value the national character of the Church, that that character cannot be maintained if its direction and government is to be entrusted to any ecclesiastical body. It may be said that the proposal is to reform Convocation by the admission of the laity. But this would not remove the objection. Such laymen as would have a chance of election would not represent the nation, besides which they would be powerless in such a body. When professionals and amateurs meet, we know which side is likely to go to the wall.

Convocation was no doubt two hundred years ago a sort of fourth estate of the realm, representing not the National Church but the clergy, even for purposes of taxation. It was at their own request that for those purposes they were merged in the nation, and taxed by the same machinery as the laity. From that time Convocation was practically without functions, and when summoned, as in 1698, the disputes between the Low Church bishops appointed by the Crown and the Jacobite clergy, ran so high as to create scandal and render their debates fruitless ; and from 1717 till our own day, though formally summoned, they were always at once prorogued.

But even if the traditions of Convocation were far more satisfactory, the chief objection remains, that to hand over the control of the Church to that body would be an infringement of the national principle, and an imitation of the practice of the sects, without any compensating advantage. For what ground from recent experience have we for believing that the various parties in the Church would agree better in Convocation than they did in 1698?

To give the powers that are claimed to Convocation would be a certain step towards a severance of all connection with the State, and consequently (in words probably familiar to many here) would inevitably lead to that "degradation which by an almost universal law overtakes religion when, even while attaining a purer form, it loses the vivifying and elevating spirit breathed into it by close contact with the great historic and secular influences, which act like fresh air on a contracted atmosphere, and are thus the divine antiseptics against the spiritual corruption of merely ecclesiastical communities" (Dean Stanley).

I am not aware of any other proposal to which the same objection does not attach. They are one and all aimed at further severance of the clergy from the Church and from the nation; whereas what we need is precisely the reverse of this—that the clergy should be brought into closer contact with the nation, and should learn to feel more and more the worth and nobleness of their earthly citizenship.

That they have a higher citizenship is of course

true, but only in the same sense in which it is true of every one of their lay brethren. That Christ is the only Head of the Church is also true, but is He not also the only Head of the nation? He is no more visible to the Church than to the nation, to the priest than to the crossing-sweeper. They hold their commission from Him no doubt, but they must receive it, with some visible seal, from some human hands; and what seal can be so worthy, so noble, as that of the nation whose children they are?

But if none of the suggestions yet made seem to offer relief, what is the outlook? Dark enough I admit, but still by no means so dark as it has often been before: for all these struggles and controversies are, after all, but the signs of a vigorous life. All that is needed—and surely England will not now for the first time need it in vain—is some small share of the self-restraint, the patience, and the courage, which have never yet failed her under God's blessing. That there must be a great reform in our national Church is clear, but she is strong enough to bear it. What has been done in our day in this direction should be encouraging instead of depressing to any one who will look at it steadily and fairly; but it is only a fraction of what is needed.

The readjustment of Church property, the establishment of the Ecclesiastical Commission, the abolition of tests, the relaxation of subscription, the reorganisation of parishes, the appointment of bishops without seats in the House of Lords, the subdivision of dioceses, the Church Discipline Acts, the revision of

the Bible, and lastly, this Public Worship Act, are all measures passed within my own memory. And surely such a list (and it might be doubled) may well give heart of grace to the most desponding : for these reforms have been made in a time peculiarly unfavourable to the development of the Church. The commercial spirit, with its utilitarian and materialistic Gospel, has been in the ascendant, with the result that the friends of the national Church have been afraid of touching a brick of the old fabric lest the whole should come about their ears, while her enemies have looked upon every effort for reform with watchful jealousy, fearing lest it should strengthen the old walls and foundations. No one can have been in the House of Commons without becoming aware of the strength of these two antagonist forces, both however working in the same direction, that of making any resolute action in Church reform all but impossible. And yet all these things I have just referred to have been done in such a time.

Why, then, should we despair of greater and better things, when a time has come in which there are unmistakeable signs that, whatever the controlling spirit may prove to be, it will not be the utilitarian, or materialistic ? If the Church has emerged from such a time as the one which is expiring, fuller than ever of spiritual life and zeal, and without having as yet lost anything of her national character, what fear is there that she will be false to her own and her country's history in the time which is coming ? It was in a crisis in several respects as serious as the present that

a wise and observant, and certainly one of the best-informed of foreign critics of our national habits and institutions, wrote:—"To this country belongs the honour of having, so far as the State is concerned, succeeded in the mighty task of reconciling individual liberty with allegiance and submission to the will of the community, whilst other nations are still wrestling with it ; and I feel persuaded that the same earnest zeal and practical wisdom which have made her political constitution an object of admiration to other nations will, under God's blessing, make her Church also a model to the world " (Prince Albert).

It is in this hope, and with this belief, that I have ventured to speak to you this evening. I know that I must have said things which may have roused painful, and possibly indignant, feelings in the minds of persons for whom individually, and for much of whose work, I should desire only to express respect and gratitude. If there should be any such here, I can only ask them to believe that it is from love to the Church, of which we are all members, not less sincere, I trust, or loyal than their own—from an estimate not lower, at any rate, though in some respects differing from theirs, of the mission of that Church, and of the work she has been called to do for the nation, and for the world—that one is constrained to be perfectly outspoken, and not to ignore or explain away facts, or to call things by any other than their plainest names at such a time as this.

There is no danger for our Church that I can see except from her own children, indeed from her own

officers. There is no deeper feeling on this subject of disestablishment in the House of Commons than irritated jealousy, having its root in social and political soil, and its expression in clever flippancy and bitterness: and the House in this matter very fairly represents the people. Those outside the Church who represent anything more serious are, I think, constantly finding it more and more difficult to persuade themselves, or any one else, that they are working for the highest good of the country, and with a single view of placing religion under the absolutely best conditions for doing the nation's work. It is only within the Church's own ranks that there is zeal and fire enough to be dangerous.

Before going further on these new and perilous ways, the discontented in her own ranks should at least count the cost more carefully than they seem yet to have done. Can any one of them say deliberately that in his conscience he believes the conditions and prospects of the religious life of this nation will be improved by the withdrawal of religion altogether from the cognisance and control of the nation? If they can answer "yes," there is no more to be said, and there can be neither peace nor even truce possible between us. If not, there is scarcely any length short of the intrusion of foreign influence in the national Church, or disobedience to the law, to which Nationalists would not go to help them. We will join them in efforts to obtain thorough Church reform, the deeper and wider the better. We have no fear of touching formularies, or canons, or rubrics, or liturgies; indeed are anxious

they should be touched, inasmuch as they are in not a few respects, obsolete and unfitted to our time. Whenever the clergy are prepared for this necessary work, which cannot be long deferred—though in the midst of the present agitation it is difficult to see how or by whom it can be taken in hand—they will find lay Churchmen cordial and strenuous helpers. All we ask of them is, that in one of the great crises of the world—the days of the Lord, as they are so well called—they at any rate shall not wantonly destroy that example of the conditions on which the Gospel and the nations can live together, which, with all its faults, is the best hitherto seen in the world, and the only one which gives us even a distant hint of how, in God's good time, the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

V.

THE GREAT EXPERIMENT OF THE PURE
VOLUNTARY SYSTEM.

SOME years ago I was invited by an eminent Nonconformist to meet two Congregationalist ministers from the United States. The party consisted of these gentlemen, one other Churchman besides myself, and some ten or twelve of our leading Nonconformists, amongst them the late Dr. Binney. The conversation turned almost exclusively on the prospects of Christianity in the two countries, which were discussed with singular candour and fairness, and I was pleased, as well as surprised, to find that most of those present were disposed to admit that the highest and noblest ideal was that of a Christian nation, in which the duty of providing for public worship and the support of religion should be acknowledged. Only it was urged that in Christendom as we have it, such an ideal had become impossible, and that, as matters stood, free voluntary churches, as existing in the United States, were a better alternative than the English, or any other Established Church. I protested against giving

up the ideal, and argued that there was no need to do so, at any rate in England, where in theory at least we had it still ; and was not a little delighted to find that the patriarch of English dissent was in sympathy with me. We met again on several occasions before his death, and on each of these he recurred to the subject, and dwelt on the hope of a possible future—far off, and of which he should never see the dawn—but which might yet, by God's blessing, knit together our children in one communion and fellowship, a Christian nation in deed and truth, as well as in name.

In another and very different society an even more significant result came under my notice. The subject of the connection of Church and State was chosen for discussion some time since at the Working-men's College, and debated for many evenings. To the greater number of those who took part in the discussion the subject was practically new, and they approached it with no strong bias one way or the other : but a considerable minority were strong Liberationists, while not more than two, or perhaps three, were, at the start, in favour of maintaining the connection. At the end of the discussion (which was a thorough one, not carried on by set speeches, but as it were in committee, by question and argumentative conversation) I will not say that there remained no difference of opinion amongst us, but none such as to lead to a division : and, I think I may say, we were practically unanimous, that from the democratic point of view it would be more patriotic, not to sever, but to maintain the connection.

These two stand out in my memory prominently amongst the experiences which give me confidence, that if only plenty of light and air are allowed to play round the question—as the Birmingham Association desire—we shall find candidates regaining the courage of their convictions, and refusing to follow the Birmingham lead. My object, however, in citing them here is, that they lead naturally to an important side of the question, I mean that of the religious condition of the United States, and our colonies, as compared with that of the mother country. I do not pretend to speak with any confidence here, because I have had no sufficient personal experience. But I have done my best to use such opportunities as have been open to me, and what follows is the result. I give my views as near as I can in the shape in which they were put before the members of the College.

During this discussion, our colonies and the United States have more than once been cited by those who are in favour of the separation of Church and State, as examples of the success of that experiment amongst people of our race. I am not, however, aware that anything has been advanced beyond general statements founded on hearsay. Nor do I pretend to be able myself to speak with any confidence on this part of the question. I have only visited one of our great colonies, and my stay in Canada was too short to enable me to form any trustworthy opinion from personal observation as to the condition and prospects of that splendid and vigorous scion of our stock in matters ecclesiastical. In passing, however, I may say,

that the one thing which did strike me was, the great and dominant position which the Roman Catholic Church seems to occupy, not only in the Province of Quebec, but in Ontario, where certainly I was not prepared, by anything I had read or heard, for such a state of things. I was not surprised to find the practical ascendancy of that Church decidedly expressed in the town of Quebec. But two hundred miles further west, in the great centre of commercial activity and enterprise, Montreal, the buildings which at once strike a stranger and give character to the city, are mostly Roman Catholic; while he cannot take up any local journal at his hotel, or walk for an hour in the streets, without feeling that it is not only in bricks and mortar, and the possession of the finest sites, that the power and activity of that Church are making themselves felt.

Cross the border and you will find much the same state of things in the Protestant province. Roman Catholicism seemed to me almost as much in evidence at Toronto and Hamilton, as at Montreal; but, as I have already said, the first impressions of a stranger are really of small value, and the possession of the central town-lots and the prominent buildings may mean very little. I trust that it may prove to be so, and that the native free churches may be able to hold their own against their powerful rival, not only in the Dominion, but in the Australias, where, however, from all one hears the outlook is by no means encouraging.

Of the United States I have somewhat more confi-

dence in speaking, as I spent three months there, and lost no opportunity of observing, and informing myself upon this question. I will give you some of my impressions as shortly as possible, for what they are worth.

In the first place I was struck by one marked contrast in the entertainment of a stranger, with what would occur in like circumstances in England. The Americans, besides being the most hospitable of mankind, are specially anxious to show you everything that they think will interest you, and make you appreciate their great country. I visited many cities, large and small, and was taken by kind friends to divers town-halls, hospitals, schools, banks, museums, parks, and all manner of public institutions, but in no single instance to a church. I don't pretend to account for, or argue from this fact; but so it was: and so far as I could judge, the reason seemed to be, that they never thought of their churches as public buildings, which could reflect either credit or discredit on the nation.

Then again the habit of family worship seems to be the rare exception in the States, even in the houses of decidedly religious people. It would be impertinent to go about questioning why this is so, and I certainly did not take that means of endeavouring to satisfy my curiosity; but, from the best observation I could make, I think that the strength of the feeling that religion is a strictly private concern, for each individual man and woman, has much to do with it. In this matter also I think that the existence of a

public or National Church in England may very probably account for the difference which certainly exists in this respect between the two countries. Why else the national habit should hold in the one, and not in the other—why one should be often astonished in England at finding it, and in America at not finding it, it is not otherwise easy to see.

I had the pleasure and advantage of staying on terms of intimacy with all sorts of people, professors, lawyers, parsons, merchants, soldiers, politicians, both in New England and in other eastern, and several western, States, and amongst all of these who troubled at all about the question, I can only recall one who was satisfied with the condition and prospects of religion in his country. I remember reading with much interest the story of Mr. Gerrit Smith's crusade against the sects, and his attempt to establish a church on Apostolic lines. The resolutions which formed the constitution of his New Jerusalem may be fairly sampled as follows :—

“Whereas the Bible teaches that the union of Christians is important, Resolved, therefore, that the division of Christians into rival sects or parties, is unscriptural and wicked.” And, “Resolved that the Gospel of Jesus Christ makes abundant provision for the closer and closer union of his disciples with each other, but makes none at all for their separation from each other, etc.”

So the staunch but eccentric Abolitionist held that the Christians in each locality constituted the Church, and that all sects should be at once and finally abo-

lished: and accordingly called on all his own neighbours to come and join him in the Church of Peterborough. He denounced not only sects, but "theologies," as the curses of mankind: and so was naturally in his turn denounced as one who "made war upon the Churches of God;" and though I believe he struggled on till his death, a year or two ago, with a small following of the broadest kind of Christians, his experiment never took hold of any large number of his countrymen; and, indeed, is scarcely known at all except to the curious in such matters. Probably nine out of ten of my American friends, if they had ever cared to give an hour's attention to Gerrit Smith and his crotchet, would have said he was crazy; but, for all that, most of them to a great extent agreed with his fundamental doctrines when you came to talk it out with them. They all thought Sectarianism as it exists in their own country a quite unsatisfactory state of things. Most of them held that the jealousy between the various sects kept their belief narrow, and expressed themselves almost as strongly as Gerrit Smith himself against "the theologies." This narrowness, they admitted, is by no means abating, and makes Church Membership in the States a real difficulty. Indeed, I found that several of the best and ablest men I met belonged to no Church at all in any sense, beyond renting sittings. They regretted that it should be so, but had no hope of anything better. One of them, however, who had lived a good deal in England, volunteered to me that, for his part, he wished they had some such arrangement as we had. I was taken by surprise to hear so strong a protest against

the exclusiveness of sects in America, as I had till then believed them to be more tolerant and liberal than with us. Mr. R. W. Dale, in his 'Ecclesia,' makes it a matter of boast that a person desiring full membership in our Nonconformist communions, must be examined; must "narrate the story of his awakening to spiritual consciousness"; and "the inward conflicts through which he had forced his way to the kingdom of God." My American friend described an analogous state of things there with sorrow, not unmingled with bitter scorn. What he valued, on the other hand, in our system, was very much that which is so strongly denounced by Liberationists—I mean, the church membership which comes to every citizen as his birthright, and which he is assumed to possess without any effort of his own, unless he distinctly repudiates it after he has grown up. What seemed to strike him most was, that he and his family had been allowed, as a matter of course, and without any question whatever, to worship and communicate in the English parishes in which he had lived, although he was not a member of the Episcopal Church in his own country, and of course not of the English Church.

This, he gave me to understand, could not have happened in the United States. Whether he was right or not in this I cannot say, but on the main point, that there is dissatisfaction with the present condition of things—unrest and uneasiness more than is merely incidental in all human arrangements—I think cannot be doubted. So far as I could judge, the testimony was practically unanimous.

With more places of worship in proportion to

numbers than in England, there is far more spiritual destitution and neglect than with us. The number of churches to which no minister is attached is very large. In the Report of the American Tract Society of two years ago it was put at twelve thousand. The proportion of persons belonging to no religious community is even larger. It was stated in the same Report that "one-third of our people, or from eight to ten millions, are unreached by the ordinary means of grace": while not more than one-sixth even profess to be members of any Christian Church. Then again there is another significant difference which struck me. The churches and chapels there are far more comfortable in their furnishing and arrangements than with us. When I remarked this to Mr. Robert Collier of Chicago with respect to his own fine church (burnt to the ground I am sorry to say in the great fire), in which the seats were the most luxuriously comfortable, and the carpets the richest, I had ever seen in a place of worship, he assured me that his congregation was mainly composed of people living by weekly wages, who nevertheless insisted on going to this expense.

And I think this costliness as to arrangements for the comfort of individuals, rather than on the fabric—a lavishness in cushions and carpets, warming and ventilation, rather than on painted windows and architectural ornament—is a characteristic of the Protestant places of worship in the States as compared with ours in England. At any rate it was so in those which I visited. It may be that this differ-

ence, if it exists generally, is only an indication of the practical character of the people, an assertion (very much needed in England), that warmth and light, and good air and comfort, are as valuable in churches as in houses. It seemed to me at any rate sufficiently marked to make it worthy of notice in comparing the external features of religious life in the two countries, as they strike an English Churchman. It is of course only these external features upon which a mere visitor can form any opinion at all, and even as to these he should be very cautious in generalising. I am far from presuming to do so, and only give you these first impressions on matters of no great moment in themselves, but bearing, I think, on the discussion we have in hand.

Let me now turn to evidence of a more weighty kind. There is of course no country in the world where all the churches, and the faith of which they are manifestations, have been so entirely free to develop naturally as in the United States, and to try whatever experiments in government, discipline, organisation, might seem good to them. And I admit at once, that the broad facts of their history seem at first sight to tell heavily in favour of a complete severance of Church and State. For, comparing the state of things now and a hundred years ago, when the connection with the mother country was severed, we find that establishment of one kind or another was then the rule throughout the colonies. In every one of them, except New York, the recognition and support by the State of public worship in some form was accepted as an

essential duty. John Adams' contemptuous saying, that you might as well expect to change the solar system as to get New England to abandon the control of her own religious life, did not exaggerate the then prevalent opinion. To-day the connection has ceased ; every trace of it has been swept away, so far as enactments and declarations can do this ; and from Maine to Texas an overwhelming public opinion has decided, that the State shall be kept a purely political organism, dealing only with secular affairs. This very remarkable change was in progress as early as 1787, when the thoroughly and advisedly secular character given to the Federal constitution no doubt lent a strong impulse to the separatist movement. But even as late as 1833 traces of the old Puritan principle of state support to public worship lingered in Massachussets. In that year the Old Bay State wiped her statute-book clear of them, and proved John Adams a mistaken prophet. The solar system remained, but Massachussets had deliberately given up, as a sovereign state, all recognition of religion. A protest was heard here and there such as that of Judge Story, who maintained, that "it yet remained a problem to be settled in human affairs whether any free government can be permanent where the public worship of God and the support of religion constitute no part of the policy or duty of the State." But, on the whole, the verdict may be taken as practically unanimous—the deliberate and unquestioned voice of the American nation.

And what has the result been ? So far as statistics

go, a marked success. At the end of the war of liberation the population of the thirteen colonies stood at three and a half millions, supporting about 1950 churches of all denominations, or one for every 1700 of the people. The last census showed that while the population had increased to 38,000,000 the churches numbered upwards of 72,000, or one for every 529 persons. Let full weight be given to this fact, which, even if we deduct the 12,000 which have no minister, is a very telling one. It is true that the multiplication of places of worship is only a negative proof of healthy religious life in a nation. But it is undoubtedly one of the essential conditions; for there can be no such healthy life where it does not exist.

The same evidence (of the last census) seems also to confute the common belief that the governing tendency of American Christianity is, to split up into innumerable sects. The name of the sects is indeed Legion, but the census shows nevertheless that the nation is gathering more and more into a few large denominations, which rank in the following order: Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Congregationalists, and Protestant Episcopalians.

But these facts being granted, we are only at the beginning of the real question. What we need to be satisfied of is, that the purely voluntary system is doing the work of Christianity better for the States than our public Church for England.

In considering this question our attention should, I think, be mainly fixed on three points: whether the

poor and the careless (that is to say, precisely that portion of the people who need it most,) are reached by the voluntary Churches ; whether these Churches are working towards union, and developing any more Catholic adaptation of the Gospel of Christ to the needs of mankind, than is the case with us ; and lastly, whether they exercise a higher and deeper influence on public life and the national character.

As to the first point, I have already told you that, so far as my own personal observation and enquiry are concerned, the state of things is, to say the least, as bad in America as in England. And this impression has been confirmed by reports and official documents without number. There, as here, there is a sad confession on all hands, that the spiritual machinery does not reach those who need it most. But there the nation stands on one side, as though this were not its concern, and it mattered nothing to the United States that the means by which the evil might be encountered remain inadequate and powerless. Here the work of making the means adequate to the need is still at any rate acknowledged as a national duty, and, so long as that is the case, there is hope that the national conscience may be roused to its fulfilment.

On the second point I prefer to give you American testimony, and it shall be of the highest class. In January 1876, the 'North American Review' devoted its centennial number to the progress of the United States during the century ; and the first article dealt with religious progress in a manner quite worthy of

the subject. The following passage bears directly on the point now under consideration.

“The tendency so clearly revealed of American Christianity to aggregate itself in a few great denominational families, strenuously affirming theological or ecclesiastical tenets that are mutually exclusive, deserves special attention in its bearing upon the prospective development of a truly Catholic type of Christianity. It might have been supposed that the contact, upon a perfectly equal footing, of so many Christian bodies, each zealously asserting its distinctive faith, would have provoked such mutual comparison as would gradually have brought into clear relief the essential truths which all were agreed in recognising. Professing to receive the same Gospel, it might have seemed that somewhere there must have existed substantial harmony ; but no such result has followed. It is amazing to note how slight has been the reciprocal influence which these bodies have exerted. They seem to have pursued their separate paths, coming into contact with each other’s opinions only to controvert them. With individuals, of course, changes of opinion have been frequent ; but, so far as concerns the formal affirmations of the leading religious bodies, with the sole exception of the Congregationalists, there has not been the slightest change. With most of these bodies no modification has been thought of ; in one or two cases, where the relaxation of some distinctive denominational feature has been suggested, it has drawn forth a storm of indignation. The irreligious world has laughed at the spectacle of

an eminent philanthropist actually brought to trial on the atrocious charge of singing hymns with Christians of another name. It is evident that our leading religious organisations have done nothing in the way of promoting any external Christian unity. There are many to whom this state of things is not repugnant, who defend the 'denominational' type of Christianity as the natural efflorescence of the Reformation, and rest content with it as the ultimate achievement of Protestant Christianity. On the other hand, there have been some who have protested against the 'evangelical' heresy that the normal state of the Church universal is a state of schism. From many quarters have come eloquent expressions of the conviction, that the sectarian system, however much it may stimulate zeal, does not furnish the conditions of the finest and noblest Christian culture. But no adequate remedy has thus far been proposed, and American Christianity seems hopelessly committed to the denominational experiment."

In a later part of the same essay the writer deals with the position which the Roman Catholic Church in America has taken up with respect to education, by which, to use his words, it "is irrevocably committed to conflict with a part of our public system which, by the great majority of our people, is regarded as absolutely essential to the perpetuity of free institutions." He is not one of those who regard the Roman Catholics in the United States as enemies of democratic political institutions; but rather gives them credit for appreciating the full advantages of a

system under which in the hundred years which have passed since the Declaration of Independence, from the last they have risen to the fourth place in numbers, and to the second in wealth, amongst religious denominations. He sees clearly that their stand as to the control of education is not only logical, but that it is a mere re-occupation of the ground which the Puritans of New England—the founders of the public schools system — defended so stoutly, during the century and a half in which they refused to regard human life as divided into two distinct spheres of action, and insisted that the spelling-book and catechism should go together. He acknowledges fairly that the remedy proposed by the Roman Catholics—the apportioning the amount raised for school purposes by taxation rateably amongst the several religious bodies—is nothing more than the precise arrangement which used to prevail in Massachussets. And thus step by step he is driven, as a fair and candid man, to the conclusion that “the problem of the relations of religious and political society is less simple than our politicians half a century ago supposed.” For, if this theory of two distinct spheres be the true one, it would be difficult to defend the present system of public education : whereas, on the other hand, “if it be the right and duty of the State to enforce the support of public education from a class of the population conscientiously debarred from sharing its advantages, then our current theory respecting the nature and functions of the State stands in need of considerable revision.”

And in this dilemma, from which escape is by no means easy, he leaves this part of the subject, and proceeds to the consideration of another burning question, the exemption of Church property from taxation. "By the immemorial traditions of all Christian countries," he writes, "such property has been exempted from taxation. When the Church was a public institution, and when the benefit of its ministrations was freely open to rich and poor alike, a sufficient reason existed for such exemption. But, it is argued, the effect of our voluntary system has been to render the modern Protestant Church little more than a religious club, where Christians in easy circumstances, by paying an annual assessment, may listen once a week to reasonably good music, and to such preaching as it pleases the Lord to send. The portion of the population debarred by pecuniary inability from enjoying this soothing Sunday relaxation is not inconsiderable; a still larger number decline to attend for other reasons. The enormous increase of our public burdens, directing as it has increased attention to the principles on which equitable taxation should be adjusted, has raised the question whether those who derive no benefit from public worship should be indirectly taxed for its support. That exemption is such indirect support, and that so far it tends to throw an additional burden upon other property, there needs no argument to show. It only differs from direct support in furnishing the most liberal assistance to those who need it least. And, conceding the general benefits that accrue to

society from the positive institutions of religion, the question still remains, Why should a 'purely political organism' give even an indirect support to religious worship?

"The manner in which this subject has been handled affords striking evidence of the confused and unsettled state of public opinion with reference to the relations of the spiritual and temporal power. Mr. Brownson claims that neither in politics nor in religion is it the destiny of the United States to realise any theory whatever. What the future may have in store for us it would be beyond the scope of this paper to predict, but a review of our past history should incline us to place a modest estimate on our success.

'Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth.'

He certainly would be a very bold or a very thoughtless man, who would venture to affirm that the ideal of Catholic unity has been reached in our system of 'strenuously competing sects,' or that the problem of Church and State has received a final solution in remitting public worship to voluntary support. At the close of a century we seem to have made no advance whatever in harmonising the relations of religious sects among themselves, or in defining their common relation to the civil power."

Now I have cited this witness at some length because he seems to me to be the very best whom we could call for our purposes. He is no partisan, but the man who was chosen by the conductors of the leading review in the United States to sum up the

results as regards religion of the first century of a national life of unparalleled vigour. He is thoroughly loyal to his own country, and proud, as all Americans are, and have good right to be, of the astonishing progress she has made ; and he is full of hope as to her future. And yet you have heard him frankly acknowledge, that no progress has been made in the United States towards the solution of the great problem of the relations of Church and State—that the churches and sects under a purely voluntary system do not show signs of coming together, but are rather inclining to insist, as essentials, on the distinctions which separate them—that the voluntary Churches have not succeeded in reaching that portion of American society which stands in the greatest need of the message which they have to deliver.

I do not ask you to infer that we in the mother country are in a higher, or more satisfactory, religious condition than our American kinsmen, or that they may not work out the problem in their own way at least as well as we shall in ours. But I do ask you to weigh evidence of this kind against the loose declamatory assertions of the Liberationists, that no such divisions between Christians exist in America as we have at home.

We will now turn to the third point, the influence of religion in America on public life, and the national character, under the purely voluntary system. It will not be disputed I suppose, that the severance of religion from politics is intended, in fact as well as in name, to keep the two spheres apart

and to provide, as far as may be, that in the realm of politics—of the dealings of the nation as a nation, with the lives, property, and destinies of its citizens—it is best for the people that other standards and sanctions should be accepted, and should prevail, than those recognised in the churches. Of course it is very difficult to estimate with anything like precision the effect which this policy has had on American politics, or how far it is answerable for the present state of things. It has always seemed to me that the triumph of Jefferson and his party at the beginning of the century—gained as it was by dressing Jacobinism in cheap philosophical robes, and professing to fall down and worship “the great voice of the people,” “the great heart of the people”—turned the nation out of the right road, and is mainly responsible for the degradation of public life in America. Their doctrines worked with subtlety and success amongst a people growing rapidly in all material prosperity, to whom, in their grand new country, the blunders which have sobered older communities were trifles to be laughed at. Why should they not believe the leaders who told them that experience was an old-world delusion, not applicable to the new conditions of the new world—that they, who were going ahead faster than any people had ever done before, had thus proved themselves fit to decide all questions, and to manage all affairs? They did believe: and the belief that one man is as good as another bore fruit in the election of judges by popular vote, rotation in office, jealousy of, manifesting itself in meanness to, all high officials. The stand made by

John Quincy Adams in his presidency only showed how the splendid self-reliance of the national character had been manipulated by politicians, till "the voice of the people" had come to mean any cry which the wire-pullers thought might prove popular. Adams refused to use the government patronage for party ends, and so General Jackson became president, and "the spoils to the victors" the law, in the government of the Union. For fifty years Jeffersonian democracy has had full swing, and, though the conscience and intellect of the nation has risen again and again in protest against it, still holds its own with the tenacity of a Briareus, every new and popular cry and delusion giving a new grip to some one of its hundred claws.

Let me again call unimpeachable native evidence to show that I am not giving my own view, as seen through English glasses. In 1873, Dr. Thompson, an American clergyman, while residing in Germany, submitted to Prince Bismarck a statement of the solution of the problem of the relations of Church and State which had been arrived at in the United States, and which (the Doctor apparently thought) might be useful in Germany. The book was republished in Boston, under the title of 'Church and State in the United States,' and attracted a good deal of notice and comment. I will quote to you that of the *Nation*, a paper which for ability and independence stands deservedly at the head of American journalism. After admitting the correctness of Dr. Thompson's presentation of the facts, the writer goes on, "the statement of our theory of the relation

between Church and State is a very simple matter. It is a simple negation of any relation at all, and we have applied that theory positively to separate them in every respect. We regard every contact and relationship between them with suspicion, and we go so far (at least this is the popular feeling, which is re-echoed in the press) as to view with suspicion any citation of religious principle, or motive, or sanction, in political affairs. Even this does not exhaust the present tendency in this matter. While we have certain religious circles who believe in the persons who are technically called 'Christian statesmen,' we have another large class who meet the application of even moral principle to politics with contempt. This latter class is growing. The downfall of some of the eminent Christian statesmen has strengthened this party and increased their number; for the popular mind is not careful to reflect, that the downfall of the Christian statesmen proves no more against Christianity than against statesmanship."

"Such being the status and tendency of feeling amongst us in regard to the relation of Church and State, and a large part of the best thinkers of the country being profoundly convinced that what is needed above all else in our politics is moral principle, and moral stamina, whether based on religious sanctions or not, it would appear that our experience is not so clear and positive a proof of our theory that we can go before the world with it as a final solution of this difficult problem. Hesitation is suggested also by another consideration. It appears from our ex-

perience that the more we popularise government, the more impossible it is to keep any public interest 'out of politics.' It is very certain that our religious faiths, of whatsoever form or grade, have very little effect at the present moment on our public life. Has the separation of Church and State led to this—that our moral principle and conscience are all in the Church, and our practical life all in the State—and have they thus become permanently sundered? Still further, have they separated the population into two groups—the honest, conscientious, and religious on the one side, and the intriguing, unscrupulous, and political on the other? The actual severance of the sober, conservative, and reflective part of our population from practical politics is an undisputed fact. It has as yet given rise to no misgivings in the popular mind as to the finality of our solution of the Church and State problem: but, if the proposition be true which is already beginning to attract the faith of the best political thinkers, that *no* public interest (taking public interest in the widest sense) can be severed from politics under our system of popular government, then even the separation of Church and State may turn out to be only a happy compromise, a great advance at the time it was made, but not a finality. It has been a great success in our history on the whole, but we find that its ultimate applications involve great difficulties. We have succeeded in putting the moral influence of the Church at a distance from politics, but the political power of the Church, which can control a consolidated voting power, is a notorious

fact. In view of this, there is room to pause and hesitate, before we offer our theory to the world as conclusive and final."

The writer goes on to argue, that it is the social circumstances, and the popular faiths and traditions of America, which have made their solution of the question a possibility, and a success. The social arrangements and popular traditions of Germany being entirely different, he doubts whether the solution suggested by his enthusiastic countryman to Prince Bismarck, and his colleagues, will be of much practical value to those brilliant statesmen. And, while he never hints at any reconsideration of the question in America, or challenges the success of what the United States have done, he does doubt "whether if we had to meet the question with our Society so far solidified as it now is, and with a number of churches accustomed to State subsidies, we could decide it in this way ourselves."

I will call one more witness from America. In December, 1873, the sister Congregational Churches of Brooklyn remonstrated with Plymouth Church on the subject of ecclesiastical discipline, which they considered to be too lax, and not according to Congregational usage, in that community. At Mr. Beecher's suggestion the remonstrance was disregarded, and Plymouth Church accepted, after debate, his view, that it is no business of the Church what a member's way of life is. Its doors should be "as wide as humanity for entrance," "as wide as necessity for departure." This decision of Plymouth Church

created some scandal, and no little astonishment and remonstrance, of which I will again take the *Nation* as the ablest spokesman I can find.

This decision, it argued, put in plain language means, that Plymouth Church is nothing but "an assemblage of persons taking an interest in spiritual things and desiring to hear Mr. Beecher preach." It is an abandonment of the old theory "which has played so large a part in English and American history, that there is a real distinction, displaying itself in outward marks, between members of Congregational churches and the world outside. According to this theory, the Church was composed of a body of persons, who had not only embraced certain beliefs with regard to Christ's character and mission, but had, as a consequence or accompaniment of those beliefs, undergone certain changes of hopes, desires, tastes, and aims, implied in the term 'conversion' or 'change of heart,' which created a real line of demarcation, and a real difference of standards, between them and their non-religious neighbours; and this change, and this alone, constituted fitness for participation in the sacrament in the Lord's Supper" and "This theory is not that of the Congregationalists alone. In the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist Churches also, membership implies an outward and visible sign of an inward change, affecting not only opinions but conduct. In England the case is widely different. There every one is in theory a member of the National Church, whatever his character or beliefs may be, and the tolerant view of what

constitutes a Christian life which this has bred, has, not unnaturally but under widely different circumstances, been perpetuated by the Episcopal Church here." But the Plymouth Church decision cannot of course be taken as an adoption of the English Church theory.

"Some one has said," the *Nation* concludes, "that this is putting the Church on 'a democratic basis,' which is true ; but then, it is by introducing into the Church organisation that feature of democracy which gives cause for a very large part of whatever apprehension exists as to the future of modern society. One of the greatest helps to conduct—which, as Matthew Arnold says, is three-fourths of life—in the ancient and mediæval world, was the close dependence of men on each other, created by various artificial arrangements. Everybody was a member of some small organisation, whose interests took his thoughts off himself, of whose honour he was jealous, and whose opinion stimulated him in any course of action which its code prescribed as best. He belonged to a small tribe, or state, or guild, or commune, or order, in which he was every day reminded of his dependence on his fellow-men ; in which he lived under continual observation, which exacted of him continual sacrifice of self, and whose concentrated censure he dared not face. The result was that, in spite of barbarism and insecurity, great ideals were kept alive, and great types of character were produced in every age. In the modern world, all these have disappeared. The only organisation the modern man belongs to is the nation, and when nations contain thirty millions of persons, each one's

sense of obligation to it is apt to be very slight. Public men have ceased to be responsible to anybody but 'the people,' and the people is so vast and busy that responsibility to it is hardly more burdensome than responsibility to Posterity, or the True, or the Good. Public opinion, too, is expressed through so many organs, and is distracted by so many objects, and is made up of so many influences, that it is all but impossible to concentrate it with any force on any one man's deeds or misdeeds. Society every day comes nearer to a promiscuous crowd, each individual of whom supplies his own tests of conduct, and his own aims in life, and lets the others go their way. The one institution which has come down to our time as an artificial check on wrong-doing, or stimulus to decent behaviour, is the Church as the Puritans set it up. It is (if we except the Quakers) the only organisation which has professed to exact more than common decency of men engaged actively in the busy work of life, and exposed daily to its trials and temptations. It took the best moral opinion of the day; and brought it to a focus, so that it was felt, not simply by society at large, but by A and B, and opposed a practical and visible obstacle to their cheating, and lying, and licentiousness, by making the disgrace of it prompt and tangible. There is nobody who has fairly considered the temptations of our time but must regret deeply that the process of social disintegration, which has already worked so much mischief, and has even attacked the family, should have reached religious organisations, and dissolved

one of the most successful. What has occurred in Brooklyn will be taken, however, as a frank confession, that what so many men of the world have maintained, is true—that church-membership was no guarantee of purity of character. Perhaps it was not ; perhaps it was folly for any tribunal to sit on the condition of a man's heart ; but this is hardly a reason for resolving itself into a simple public meeting. It might, if it cannot exact holiness, at least exact, and successfully exact, decency of life, by judging and casting out slanderers, cheats, forgers, blackmailers, adulterers, and peddlers of worthless securities. The Stock Exchange does something of this kind, and so do most clubs ; can it be that we are about to witness a formal confession by religious bodies, not only that we are all sinners, but that in democratic communities one sinner is just as bad as another, and that the difference between robbery and petulance is not worth a Christian man's notice ?”

I have dwelt on these matters at some length because the argument from the religious condition of America is the strongest shaft in the Liberationist quiver. It was certainly the one which weighed most with me until I had been in the country, and had done my best to learn the opinions of the ablest and most thoughtful Americans themselves. Having done so I can find nothing in their half-a-century experiment of the voluntary system to make me wish that England should follow it.

During that half century, however, there has been one heroic period, which raised not this or that section,

but the nation, above the ordinary recognised sphere of politics, and has not only left behind it glorious memories, but has strengthened men's faith in a nobler political future. I need not say that I refer to the struggle for the abolition of slavery, culminating in the election of Abraham Lincoln, and the civil war. But, let me remind you that this period was heroic just because the two spheres which the Jeffersonian would keep absolutely distinct became here hopelessly mixed in American politics. Men, who, as the politicians protested, ought to have known and respected the rules of the game, got up in Congress with bible-texts and arguments in their mouths, appealing to standards and sanctions, which, as all politicians were agreed, should be kept for the pulpit. So they had to be assaulted in the House, and ostracised in society ; to what purpose, the triumph of the cause for which they contended has shown.

But what do I infer from all this, even if my views be accepted as true ? Do I mean that if the United States had kept an Established Church they would have had a judiciary appointed for fitness, a permanent civil service, no King Caucus, and would have abolished slavery a generation sooner ?

No, I mean nothing of the kind. My case doesn't need it. All I have to show is, that the absolute severance of the two spheres—the resolute attempt to keep politics and religion clear of one another—in the United States, has not in either sphere produced results which we in England should desire to attain. If then, as I hold, the other religious bodies in the

States are not broader or more tolerant than with us, while the Protestant Episcopal Church is certainly less so than the mother Church, which still remains national—if their system has managed to banish the best men from politics, and their political life is allowed by themselves to be in a thoroughly unsatisfactory, if not in a dangerous, condition—my case is proved. The “severance of Church and State” may remain in England a Liberal Shibboleth, but as a policy it cannot be fairly supported by the example of the United States.

VI.

TO A CHURCH UNION.

(Parts of an Address delivered at Hull, December 1876.)

IT seems a somewhat hopeless task just now to speak in such an Institution as this of any subject but that most critical one which is absorbing (and rightly absorbing) the thoughts and energies of every English citizen who cares for the good name and the honour of his country. I say rightly absorbing, because no less a stake than the good name and honour of England is at issue in this Eastern Question. Putting aside all miserable party squabbles and recriminations, all considerations of whether Tory, Whig, or Radical are to gain in our insular struggles for power, by the answer which must be given within the next few weeks to the question, What shall be done now in these winter months of 1876, with the unhappy nations who inhabit the fairest corner of Europe? one thing remains perfectly clear, and that is, that the decision of this Eastern Question practically rests with this country. We have seen within the last fortnight, since

England's Plenipotentiary has been making the tour of European Courts, and conferring with the statesmen who for the moment control the destinies of the great powers, that, one after another, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, stand deliberately aside, and give place in this matter to our representative. He is to preside at the conference at Constantinople, and it is he, and therefore, England, who, like the Ambassador of Rome before the senate of Carthage, holds peace or war in his mantle, and can give which he will. It matters not how this has come about, it boots not now to inquire whether by other action in May or in August—when the Andrassy Note or the Berlin Memorandum were open to our acceptance—we could have shared this tremendous responsibility with others. May and August are as far behind us in this matter as last century. What might have been, may be left to our political leaders to fight over, when their time comes, as come it surely will; what is, and shall be, is still, let us hope, in the nation's power; and I for one rejoice therefore to feel, that every man and every woman who love the land that gave them birth, can think of nothing, and work for nothing in this her great hour of need, but the maintenance of her good name unsullied, and the vindication of her old renown for good faith and just dealing amongst the nations.

If, then, I could think that our subject of this evening would lead you off the scent, or that the hour to be given to this question of Church prospects at home, would abate the interest, or slacken the zeal

of any one here in the Eastern Question, I would ask you even now to hear me on that subject, or to return to your homes. But, believing as I do that the two subjects are at any rate so far in touch that we can scarcely think seriously on the one which is just now in the background, without gaining strength and clearness in dealing with the one which calls for prompt decision and action, I can go on and say my say with a clear conscience. For I, at least, hold, and have always held, the Church question to be one altogether outside of, and above party politics, one which we are bound as good citizens to approach without any thought how its solution in one direction or another will bear upon the parties or the government of to-day or to-morrow. And if this be so, and we can to-night get ourselves to think, and examine, to the best of our ability, not how church or chapel, orthodoxy or dissent, can be strengthened or humiliated, but under what conditions the Christian Gospel—the good news of Christ—can be most effectually offered to every man woman and child in these realms, we shall find ourselves in a better frame of mind to decide in the morning how we would have England act with regard to her fellow Christians in the East, and their Turkish masters. The effort to raise ourselves to the true standpoint in the one case will help us in the other, though there may be no direct or obvious connection between them.

Turning then to our subject, we are met on the very threshold with the question which our age is asking very eagerly, more eagerly and searchingly than any

which has gone before it: "What is the use of talking about Church prospects? Has what you call the Church, which must mean some form or other of Christianity, any prospects at all? There is no Christian Church or sect which does not stand upon a supernatural foundation, and has not that foundation already crumbled to pieces before modern scientific inquiry? There is no Christian Church or sect which does not hold the Bible to be in some special sense a Divinely inspired book. Has not Biblical criticism finally reduced your sacred books to the level of ordinary human literature?" It would not be honest to pass these questions by, and I am the last man to wish to do so. But even if a popular lecture were the method, this is not the place, for dealing with them. We are met in a Church Institute, the existence of which assumes that you, its members, are satisfied (or I presume you would not belong to it) that, however severe the shocks may be which Christianity has sustained, and may have to sustain in the future, it will surely rise above them, and hold its own hereafter as a living religion, the only power which can, and assuredly will, in time, redeem the world out of the depths of misery and wretchedness in which it still welters. At any rate, that is my own deepest conviction. I have no doubt whatever that the Christian faith will survive the deep unrest of our day, and come forth all the stronger and purer from the fire, whatever of its old trappings and environments may perish in the process, as much of them undoubtedly will perish. And in this conviction I can honestly speak to you on

the subject of our Church prospects, and ask you to consider with me to-night not only what these are, but what they may be made.

In order to clear the ground then, let me say at once in what sense I am using the word Church. Willingly and thankfully acknowledging, as I do, that widest and highest meaning, which embraces all Christian organisations, and all individuals who accept the name "Christian," though they may belong to no Church or sect, I do not propose to use it in that sense to-night. I wish to speak of the Church, as that word is commonly used and understood in England, and as you, who are members of this Society, use it, that is to say, as that particular form in which Christianity has been deliberately accepted, established, and upheld by the English nation. This one cardinal fact is the first upon which the attention of every one who comes to the serious consideration of this great subject should be fixed. We have here in the midst of us a religious national organisation, older than the national civil government, for, before the Saxon kingdoms were united under the kings of Wessex, a thousand years ago, the Church—very much what it is now, in all essentials, except its relations with Rome—was already organised and at work in every English parish. It was, in fact, national, before our ancestors knew that they were a nation, and has retained this nationality as its leading characteristic from that day to this. The Pope claimed, indeed, supremacy here as elsewhere, and was often very near making his claim good. But he never did make it

good. Papal supremacy was always illegal in England, and denied and resisted by Norman and Plantaganet kings and their Parliaments as firmly as by the Tudor princes, under whom the final separation was effected : and no one of the great Englishmen who bore a part in the final work ever dreamt of establishing a new Church or a new faith, but only of reforming and purifying the Church and the faith which had come down to them.

The English nation at the time of the Reformation never entertained a doubt that the State was bound to concern itself with other matters besides the preservation of body and goods. The men of that day knew that the religion of a nation has more influence on its character than all other causes put together. They had a high ideal of what a State should be, and therefore claimed for their own State the right, and the duty, of directing and controlling the religion of the English people as its highest function. It took some two hundred years of fierce strife to convince the nation that this claim had been put too high. Inch by inch, and with the greatest unwillingness, the ground was abandoned. The nation learned, through bitter experience, that there could be no peace in the land till men were left free in this highest matter to follow the guidance of their consciences, in whatever direction these might lead them. This national confession was made, and the first step towards liberty of conscience taken, in the first year of the reign of William of Orange, when the Toleration Act was passed exempting all Dissenters who would take the oath of allegiance and

sign the declaration against Popery from the penalties of Elizabeth's Act of Obedience, and Charles II.'s Act of Uniformity. But the old theories were still strong, and it was only as it were inch by inch that the ground was won upon which we now stand so firmly. It was not till the reign of George III. that, in Hallam's words, "such a genuine toleration as Christianity and philosophy alike demand had a place in our statutes." In that reign Acts were passed for protecting Dissenting chapels, and extending the Toleration Act to Unitarians. In the reign of William IV. the good work made long strides. Dissenting chapels were placed on a level with the parish churches, so far as exemption from Church and poor rates could do this; the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed, the Catholic Emancipation Act was passed. But it was not till the present reign that the battle for religious liberty was finally won when the Act of 1846 was passed, repealing all statutes and parts of statutes which imposed any penalties on religious belief.

But while the English nation has thus finally and for ever abandoned all claim to control the religious beliefs of any section, or of any individual amongst its citizens, it has never abandoned the right, or disclaimed the duty, of maintaining the connection between the State as a civil, and the State as a religious, organisation, but has, on the contrary, hitherto deliberately maintained that connection, which remains practically what it always has been. Before passing, then, to the consideration of how far this national organisation for religious purposes is in accord with the modern

democratic spirit of the times in which we live, let us fairly recognise the fact for what it is worth, that this religious organisation of the nation which we call the Church of England, has been upheld by our forefathers for thirty generations. This may be no reason why we should continue to uphold it, if, after the most earnest consideration, we find that it is no longer in sympathy with the nation, and that its continued existence outrages the national conscience. But it *is* a reason for pausing, and insisting on the most deliberate action in this matter. This is no time for cutting, in lightness of heart, or intellectual impatience, any of the links which bind us to the past. It has not been by such methods that our forefathers have preserved, and handed down to us, that great inheritance of which the Church is a part. Thirty generations of Englishmen have vigorously asserted, or assented to, the principle, that it is best for the nation that the outward organisation of religion should remain under the same control, whatever that may be, as the other organisations which together make up England. It is no light thing to reverse their judgment.

And now, turning to consider the question of how far the Church of England is in harmony with the modern democratic spirit, let us first remark that it is, in its national character, a creation of the people themselves. It has not been forced on them by foreign prelates or princes, it is not a society apart—in them but not of them—it is they who have the ultimate control over it, they govern it through and by the same machinery which they use for carrying on their

civil business. Through that machinery they can make it what they please, distribute its revenues, alter its discipline, prescribe its duties. Of what other religious organisation can this be said ?

But this modern spirit is before all things an equalising spirit, claiming that the good things of this world shall be more widely distributed, protesting against privilege and exclusiveness in temporal and spiritual matters ; and it is often used as an argument against the National Church that her existence offends against this spirit. Even if it were so, the answer is again, "the remedy is in our own hands. If the Church is not democratic enough, make it more so." But let us look at the matter a little closer. In the first place there is no wider basis possible for a National Church than the nation—a truism, no doubt, but one which it is not superfluous to insist on—and this is the one upon which our Church stands. Thus, in every centre and in every remotest corner of this land alike, the nation offers with open hand all the ministrations of religion to every one of her children. There is no exception whatever made by her. The dweller in any English village has the right to the use of the national buildings and the services of the minister. These are a part of his birthright of which he can only be deprived by his own voluntary act. He need not take up his birthright, but there it is for him if he will ; and the clergy, as officers of the nation, are bound not only to give the offices of religion to all who ask for them, but to offer them to those who do not. This is of the very essence of the Church as the English nation has established it.

The nation holds that these things are good for all ; that those who accept and use them rightly will be the best citizens. Accordingly, they are provided for all ; every person born in these realms or of English parents being, in theory at any rate, a member of the Church. It takes an exercise of the will to become a member of any of the self-governed Churches and sects which exist amongst us ; whereas, it takes an exercise of the will not to be a member of the National Church. This is a vital distinction, and one which it seems to me of the utmost importance to get clear about in our own minds. The other Christian bodies in this country are by their constitution limited to those who have been converted, or who accept some tests which make them members, and by their constitution it cannot be otherwise. But surely this is a very low ideal for the Christian Church, whose principal work should be with those who have not come in, who are outside the fold. Practically it may be said that the self-governed churches and sects are engaged in missionary work amongst us as well as the Church of England, but, in their case, it is a work of supererogation, while it is an essential part of her duty. "We see this difference," says an able writer, once himself a Nonconformist, "if we consider that the minister of a Dissenting chapel is not expected to attend to any but his own congregation, whilst the clergyman is bound to be at the call of every person in his parish ; although, of course, others are welcome, the services of a chapel cannot be joined in as of right, except by its members, whilst those of the Church are open to all those who choose to come. It

is one thing for work to be done or not as we choose, and another for it to be a part of our duty. If the National Church does not do its duty properly, it should be made to do so. But the destruction of that Church would be a great blow to the future spread of Christianity, for then there would be left no organisation bound to minister to the unconverted as well as to the converted." (G. Harwood's 'Disestablishment.')

This going out into the highways and hedges is at once the special glory and the *raison d'être* of the National Church—this carrying the offices and consolations of religion to the very doors of those who have no wish for them, who would sooner be without them—and it is a work which the voluntary Churches seem quite unable to perform. And for this simple reason, that self-supporting religious bodies, as a rule, cannot exist in the poorest quarters of great towns, or in remote country districts, the precise places in which they are most needed. This is no reproach either to congregations or ministers. The minister must live, however great his zeal may be, and, in order to live, he must follow those of his congregation who hold the purse-strings, and who will not live in poor and crowded districts. But it is a great gain that the nation has ready made to its hand a religious organisation which can meet the new conditions of life of our time, which can and does bear the strain which our rapidly changing industrial life is throwing upon it by the accumulation of our people in the outskirts of our great cities and manufacturing towns, and can meet crime, and vice, and misery, in their own haunts

with a steady and permanent front. I am not for a moment suggesting that this work is effectually done, or that there are not great arrears to be made up, but I do say that there is no hope or chance of its ever being done at all except by a national organisation, and that the Church has been roused to the paramount necessity of doing it, and is proving itself year by year more equal to the task. There is another characteristic of the National Church which cannot be valued too highly in times like ours, and which is, as I believe, directly due to its connection with the State, which we are told so narrows and cripples it—of all religious organisations it is the one which allows and can bear the greatest freedom of religious thought. And it is precisely because it is national, because it is under the final control, in all questions of membership, of the civil power, because the calm, dispassionate and trained intellects of laymen are brought to bear upon the passionate differences of theologians, that this wise latitude is possible. Does any one suppose for a moment, that in these last thirty years, in which there has been so vivid an awakening of spiritual life amongst us, there would have been no rending of the Church in fragments, no great schism like that of the Free Kirk in Scotland, had such a body as Convocation been the ultimate court of appeal, and the governing power in the Church ?

Restless spirits, not a few, chafe under this national control and are tempted from time to time to throw it off. It is made a subject of reproach against the Church of the nation by those of other communions.

But, surely, all those who believe that Christianity was intended to be the common inheritance of all men—that its mission is not to separate men, but to bring them together, not to build up, but to break down walls of partition—must in their best moments rejoice that in our country there is one religious organisation so tolerant, so elastic, or, if you will, so latitudinarian. The disease of this same time amongst our other religious organisations has been the constant tendency to split up, and it is abundantly clear that the Church would have suffered from it as severely as any other body, but for that control of the nation which is said to be her weakness, and from which she is so loudly called to free herself.

There is another reason why I think that this large tolerance within the Church of which I have been speaking is of immense national value. There is a large class of the most cultivated and intellectual people of this country, of excellent moral character, who are quite contented to remain members of the National Church, using its offices and ministrations habitually, but who assuredly would not be admitted, or desire to be admitted, into any other communion. The best known perhaps of these is Mr. Matthew Arnold, who, in his later writings, has explained that, in his view, the Church is “a National society, for the promotion of goodness.” An entirely inadequate view, no doubt, most of us would say, but one which expresses part of the truth; and which it would be the height of folly, in the interests of the nation, and of religion, to run the risk of destroying in men’s minds.

Taking, then, these points which have been noticed, I would ask you to consider whether a religious organisation which is open to the whole nation, without any distinction, which is specially devoted to the outcasts and the poor, which no one need use unless he pleases, which can and does retain in communion men of views as widely different as those of the Ritualists and Mr. Matthew Arnold, and which is under the control of the State, and of no private body of citizens, is not, in theory, more in harmony with the modern spirit than any other religious organisation with which we are acquainted, or any of which we can at present form any idea? If it is not so in practice it is the fault of the people; and the remedy is in the hands of the people, who can apply it in the same way and through the same machinery, as they would use to reform any other part of their institutions. That in one sense it is not democratic, may be readily admitted; but then, no more is the English nation, and when the nation changes we have every ground for believing that the Church will change also. It is competent for the nation to change the form of its government into that of a republic, and for those Englishmen who desire such a change to work for it. When that time comes, doubtless the national organisation of religion will be modified in a similiar direction; meantime what we have to consider is, whether the Church does or does not fairly represent the nation in its present phase, and in making up our minds upon this point it is only fair to bear in mind that what are commonly called the great prizes in the National Church are

absolutely open to all. There is no profession more democratic in the true sense of the word than that of the ministry of the National Church, and none in which a larger proportion of those who have started in life with no advantages whatever have risen to the highest places. * * * *

It must be borne in mind that to sever the connection between the State and the National Church must destroy the Church. It is not its Episcopal constitution, or its possession of the cathedrals, churches, glebe and tithes, or its Thirty-nine Articles, or even its Prayer Book, or its grand history and traditions, which make the Church of England the National Church. It might retain all these, and lose its national character ; or, on the other hand, it might lose its endowments, and change its constitution, and yet retain its national character. For this consists in its national continuance, as an integral part of the constitution of the country—as the organisation of its higher life which the nation approves and offers to its people, and keeps under its own control. Should England, through weariness or impatience, or from any other cause, ever agree to the divorce, apart from other dangers, this one would most assuredly confront us. That indifference to religion, as a matter with which practical men have no need to trouble themselves—already so wide spread at both poles of our civilisation, amongst our cultivated classes, under the influence of the avowed agnosticism of many of the most able of our scientific leaders ; amongst the masses of our poor, under the influence of the grinding struggle for existence in our competitive world—will gain tenfold strength. If the nation shall

solemnly declare that it has no longer any concern with the religion of its people—that it can and will for the future get on without an effort to provide anything beyond protection of life and property—what inference can be drawn, but that obvious one, that these are the only essential matters about which good citizens need concern themselves. It would be a virtual abandonment by England of the struggle which she has maintained ever since she became a nation, an admission of failure in the highest sphere of human endeavour, a confession that, so far as she is concerned, the inspiring prophecy that one day the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, is a fond dream.

But, if the English nation strikes its flag and abandons the struggle, there is a power which assuredly will not do so. The Church of Rome has made progress of late in England, which, while rousing us to watchfulness, need perhaps as yet cause us little anxiety. But let the nation once openly profess that the religion of the people is no longer the affair of the State, and declare that a National Church is henceforth impossible, and an impetus will be given to the action, and a support to the claims, of the Church which professes to be universal, which the State will find itself unable to meet, except with weapons which have never proved of much value in this warfare. If the State will not rule the Church, the Church will rule the State, and our children may have to fight over again the battles which we have been wont to believe had been won for all time.

The progress which the Romish Church is making

here and in the United States, in spite of the late Vatican decrees, is a subject upon which no thoughtful man will speak lightly. But, it may be said, that the Church of England, even after she had been separated from the State, though no longer carrying the prestige of national authority, would be strong enough to hold her own. To me it seems idle to hope that this would be so. She would then be nothing but a Religious Society, differing only in size and prestige from the other Christian Protestant sects. She would be governed by a Synod, composed chiefly of ecclesiastics, and, keen as all such bodies must be to scent heresy, and to magnify doctrinal differences, there is too much reason to believe that she would speedily split up into fragments, and so add several new recruits to the disgraceful war of "strenuously competing sects." But, assuming that she were to remain unbroken, and were to prove able to hold her own against Rome and the competing sects, then another and most serious danger would arise to the nation. For, though she would be no doubt deprived of much of her property before being turned adrift, there are certain portions which no one who understands England will for a moment suppose can be taken away from her. She would retain the cathedrals, parish churches, parsonages, and probably the glebes; and wealth enough besides to support her machinery in working order, until the tide of gifts and bequests (which would pour into her coffers in even greater abundance than in these last church-building years, when such contributions must be reckoned by millions)

had more than made up for all that she had lost. With her roots struck deep in every family and every parish, her energies thoroughly roused by the struggle through which she had been passing, and eager to lose no jot of her influence and prestige ; she would be left face to face with the civil government, in no friendly mood with the power which had cast her adrift. Unless a great and very improbable change were to come over her spirit in the meantime, the power over this great religious organisation would pass into the hands of the High Church party, whose views as to the proper relations of the temporal and spiritual power scarcely differ from those of Romanists. Who can doubt that such power in such hands would prove a serious danger to civil and religious liberty ? We English might escape the clutches of giant Pope, for here would be a spiritual power competent to keep him at bay. But, said Luther, "every little priest, however humble, carries a little pope under his cassock" ; and we should fall into hands which we should scarcely like better than the Pope, and of which it would be more difficult to loosen the hold on the political and social life of the nation.

Church prospects, then, you will see by this time, seem to me to be of the gloomiest character, if this revolutionary change should be made in our constitution. On the other hand, if, and so long as, the present relationship continues between Church and State, in spite of many serious drawbacks, I can look hopefully to the future.

"These are anxious days for religion," says the

author already quoted more than once, "such as shake the faith of its timid friends, and even make those sad who have unswerving confidence in the omnipotence of God, and in the ultimate and universal triumph of a religion which has always come victorious out of dangers which seemed infinitely greater. The old, simple, manly, practical Christianity which the Bible teaches, and which has been the faith for so many generations of the best of our forefathers, is going out of fashion, and the Christian world seems to be dividing itself up between priestly domination on the one hand, and on the other worldly indifference or antagonistic scepticism. The torch of pure religion, lit by the Lord Himself with the fire of Heaven, is being trodden out under the contending feet of fanatics and unbelievers. It can only be picked up and borne onwards by the hand of a Church which is practical as well as spiritual, human as well as Divine, National as well as Christian. Protestant revivalism, like Roman Catholicism, sets the other world against and above this, and to Nationalism is reserved the task of properly reconciling the two; of joining practicality and spirituality, life with religion, earth with heaven; of making Christianity a sensible reality as well as a devout enthusiasm. Can there be a nobler work, or one more needed than this which lies especially before the National Church of England? No better motto can be chosen as a guide to success than that which is attributed to Baxter: "In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things charity."

But to approach the work of the future with the

power, and in the spirit here indicated, the Church has to do much in the way of reform of her own constitution on the one hand, and of change in the spirit in which she has but too often dealt with fellow Christians not of her own communion, and with the poor, on the other. The nation will make no move in this work until it sees that the Church is thoroughly in earnest, Parliament disliking to be called upon to deal with questions of Church reform more than with any other business. And the authorities within the Church, it must be owned, have shown a caution and timidity which would seem to imply the existence of that distrust they have been so often accused of feeling, the belief that, if one plank or stone were touched, the whole building would come crashing about their ears. They must get rid of these fears and doubts and set to work to overhaul the building. Mr. Arnold tells us, as a fact within his own knowledge—and the experience of all men I know who have the means of forming an opinion on the subject bears him out—that there are numbers of able young men ready to enter the service of the National Church, were it not for the professions which are still required of them before they can be admitted to serve. And who can wonder at this, when we retain the definitions and formulas of three hundred years ago, as the expression of the national faith of to-day? In the face of the wider and larger knowledge which science and Biblical criticism have opened to our generation, it is hopeless to expect that men of cultivation and ability can solemnly pledge themselves, even in the general form now required, to

the propositions contained in the Thirty-nine Articles, or to use the Athanasian Creed in the Church Service. Nor is there the least need why this should be required of them. The articles served their purpose in their own day, and continue admirable statements upon controversies, which were then living, but have long since been dead and buried. It is good to treat them with respect; but to keep them alive any longer, as tests of the beliefs of young men who have grown up in the present half century, is to put a wholly unnecessary impediment in the way of candidates for holy orders, and to encourage dishonesty, and self-deception, in the very places where, before all others, there should be truthfulness, and clearness of sight. In speaking on this subject, Mr. M. Arnold says: "The Ordination Service itself, on a man's entrance into orders, and the use of the Church Services afterwards, are a sufficient engagement on the part of those who desire to take service in the National Church." And Mr. Arnold is perfectly in the right here. It is the most crying need of the Church to have these necessary reforms carried through, that she may no longer be hampered with the trappings and garments of three hundred years ago. "It was a premature decision on the details of Church government and doctrine, in the absence of a broad leading principle," Prince Albert writes, in his Memorandum on the Church Crisis in 1851, "and the fact of their being finally settled for posterity by those into whose hands the conduct of the Reformation fell, which prevented the Church of England from participating in that constant and free

development which the State has been able to derive from the broad principles of Magna Charta."

He had no fear of touching formularies which have been with us an object of almost superstitious regard for so long, but believed that new life and strength would spring up under bold but reverent handling. The constitution of the Church he knew required reform, and was strong enough to bear it. He urged that it should be begun in time, holding that the most opposite opinions might exist as to details, but that these might well be left to time and public discussion to settle by degrees; and that "the same respect for historical tradition and vested rights, which has marked the progress of the British Constitution, added to a high sense of the sacred nature of the work to be performed, will not fail to attend this development."

But his advice and warnings have fallen on unwilling ears, and the reforms which he pleaded for are scarcely yet commenced. Meantime, the most marked increase has occurred in the impatience of sectarian differences and disputes in the minds of all thinking men who are not engaged in the strife of religious parties. Especially has this been the case within the Church. When shall we hear less of these theological janglings and hair-splittings and more of the Gospel, which, after all, we all hold in common? It is said, however, by some, as I think, unwise defenders of the faith, that a colourless Christianity is no Christianity at all, that you can have no Church without a definite creed. To the first I would reply that, after all, the bright white light is, in its purity, better than all colour. To the

second, I admit that every Church must have a definite creed, but the more simple and broad that creed is the better. It is only the simplest creed which can give us the unity, or the tolerance in diversity, for which all good men are longing.

It is the business of every Englishman who cares for the great national inheritance to which he has been born, and especially of the officers of the Church of the nation, to lend a hand with these necessary reforms. The spirit in which parsons should come to the work cannot be better defined than by Prince Albert, who writes that a bishop should be "meek and liberal, and tolerant of other confessions: but let him never forget that he is a representative of the Church of the land, the maintenance of which is as important to the country as that of its constitution, or its throne. Let him be always conscious that the Church has duties to fulfil, that it does not exist for itself, but for the people, and for the country, and that it ought to have no higher aim than to be the Church of the people."

Meekness, liberality, tolerance of other confessions! These are great virtues, but hard, very hard to practise in such hurrying, driving, democratic, competitive times as ours, when respect for authority seems to have almost died out. Nevertheless, they must be practised, if the Church is ever to fulfil her great mission, and to become in a larger and truer sense than she has ever yet been, "The Church of the People."

VII.

CONSERVATISM OF CLERGY, ETC.

THERE are several matters frequently debated in this controversy, which have either been entirely omitted, or only casually referred to as yet, in these pages. I have had, however, to speak on them on different occasions ; so, without troubling my readers with more addresses, which would be in many respects only repetitions of those already given, I subjoin the following extracts, which at any rate raise the points sufficiently to "let the light and air play round them." All I desire is, that my countrymen and countrywomen, especially those who are Liberals, should just take trouble enough to know what the points at issue in this Church question are. The facts upon which their judgment should be formed, lie round on every side, just as open to them as to me. If they will only look at them and clear their minds of cant, political and religious, on this subject, that is all one can ask. The fear is lest they should leap in the dark.

CONSERVATISM OF CLERGY.

Let me now say a few words on an argument which is made to do service constantly on Liberation plat-

forms, and which appeals specially to Liberals, I mean the Conservatism of the Church clergy as a body. It is said, that as a body, they have opposed every popular reform upon which the nation has set its heart, that (to use Mr. Chamberlain's words) they are "part of a vast mutual assurance against change, to which the landlord, the publican, and every vested right and privilege, readily contribute." I will not question the general truth of this charge, though it is only fair to remark that, as regards one of the vested interests referred to, that of the publican, the Church clergy have shown themselves of late years its most powerful and dangerous enemy. The Church of England Temperance Society, with the full bench of bishops at its head, and a branch in thousands of parishes, is doing as much as all other influences put together, to grapple with the national sin: and I for one don't see how the national sin can be so well confronted as by a national religious organisation.

But on the whole I freely admit it is beyond dispute that the Church clergy have been, and are, as a rule, Conservatives, and that much of their conservatism, such as their opposition to the Burials Bill, is of a kind peculiarly exasperating, not only to Nonconformists, but even more so to Liberal Churchmen. These latter are apt to get out of patience, and to say, or at any rate to feel, with Mr. Hugessen, that the parsons will soon make disestablishment certain.

But, even on the assumption that the National Church clergy are, and are likely to remain, at any rate till the Church is reformed, incurably Conservative,

how far does that go towards proving that it will be for the good of the nation to sever their connection with the State? The army is quite as Conservative as the Church, and opposed the recent military reforms, upon which the nation was bent, at least as resolutely as the clergy are opposing the Burials Bill. Are we going to abolish the army because of this? During the long discussions on the military reforms of the late government, the professional opposition was often, and with justice, denounced as factious; the officers, it was said, were forgetting that they were servants of the nation, and acting as though they were a separate caste, who valued the interests of their caste above national interests. How were they met? By the resolute determination of the nation to assert the national character of the army, and to regain the control of it. And the most strenuous asserters of this principle were that section of the Liberal party, who are now maintaining just the opposite principle in the case of the National Church.

They who saw most clearly that the army ought to be made thoroughly national, and to that end must be bought back again from the soldiers and thrown open to the nation, are now taking the opposite side, and striving to denationalise the Church, and to narrow it into a sect, from which the nation is to be excluded. They cannot be right in both contentions. Of the two the Church is the more powerful body, and though by its constitution and character it can never be as dangerous to liberty as a standing army, I feel that it might become, even in England, a serious

danger. Therefore, the conclusion seems to me to follow, that Liberals at any rate should strive to make it national. The nation, by its own good nature and carelessness, has to a great extent lost its control over the Church, as it had over the army, and I say that we Liberals should try to make it take hold again in earnest of the Church, as it has of the army.

And I say further, that the nation will get strenuous help in this work of reform from the best of the clergy themselves.

For, Conservative as the profession is as a whole, there is always a strong band of Liberals of the best type amongst them. I need only name half-a-dozen under and with whom I myself have worked, Arnold, Maurice, Robertson, Kingsley, Stanley, and Davies, in proof of this. Scores of other names will occur to anyone, of men who invariably stand on the Liberal side, through good and evil report, such as Fraser, Temple, Pattison, Bradley, Fremantle, Jowett, M. Butler, Stopford Brooke, Brooke Lambert, Hansard, Harry Jones, and Percival. Why, I could run on to a hundred of my own acquaintance, were it worth while. I don't know where you will find a higher and better sample of what Liberals should be than such men as these. And if I am told that many, or, at any rate, that the most distinguished, of them have been suspected—that the Church (meaning the dominant section of the Church for the time being) has tried to get rid of them, and would be only too glad to do so still—I reply that this, so far from weakening, is all in favour of my argument. For these men have been able to hold their

ground, to speak their minds, and take their line, freely and fearlessly, just because their Church is national.

The day that it ceases to be so will be the beginning of a time when such service as they have done, and are doing, for the nation, will become more and more difficult. I say "for the nation," because, of course, they will be still able to do the kind of work which leading Dissenting ministers are doing for select congregations. I am glad to acknowledge the strong liberal sympathies and teaching of such men as Mr. Baldwin Brown, Mr. Newman Hall, Dr. Allon, and other leading Dissenting ministers. I believe it to be thoroughly genuine and conscientious, and that no congregational pressure would induce them to change it. But, nevertheless, the fact remains, that they are in full sympathy with their own congregations in their political Liberalism—that this is what the people who gather round them want to hear, and their attention is mainly fixed upon these people—and all I maintain is, that the theological (not the political) atmosphere is freer in which the Church parson breathes, and the ground broader and firmer upon which he stands. Dr. Parker or Mr. Dale may be just as good Liberal politicians as Dean Stanley, for instance ; up to a certain point, are indeed, far more certain to be found on the side of popular Liberal cries : but, as Liberal theologians, they cannot be compared for a moment. Indeed, as far as I am aware, there is no man amongst English Nonconformist ministers (always excepting Mr. Martineau) who has any claim—or indeed who has shown any desire to assert a claim—to that title.

I do not suppose that any Liberationist would deny this as to theology. The Society, indeed, puts forward as one of the reasons for belonging to it, that it "aims to demolish great hindrances to that freedom of thought and loyalty to conscience, which are essential to noble living, national and religious." But it is obvious that these words are not intended to cover freedom of thought on theological subjects, because one of their main arguments against the Church is founded on the (to them) scandalous laxity of her doctrine, and still more scandalous freedom of her thought. "The doctrine of the Church of England," writes Mr. Parkinson indignantly, "gives room for the utmost play of theological limb. Within its boundaries all phases of faith may disport themselves." "The belief of the clergy of the Church of England at present ranges through every shade between Ultramontaniam and Atheism," mourns a Canadian Liberationist. The Liberator, contrasting the Scotch with the English Establishment, sneers at a Church, "so broad as to be practically creedless; so comprehensive that sceptics or unbelievers may find in it an undisturbed home." "Talk of an Act of Uniformity," exclaims the Rev. J.G. Rogers, "why you will find as many different shades in the Establishment as you will in all the Dissenting Communities." I might multiply quotations to any extent, proving that the "strait gate and narrow way" is preferred by our Nonconformists, not only in conduct, but in faith; but it would be waste of time.

Now these facts point to one or two conclusions as to the Conservatism of the Church clergy. First,

that it is in the main political, and therefore of comparatively little importance. What *is* of national importance in regard to professional men is, that they should be Liberal on their own special subjects, which they do, or ought to, understand, and on which, at any rate, they are the acknowledged authorities, and not on subjects on which they are no greater authorities than other men. Secondly, that the Church clergy are as a rule more Liberal than Nonconformist ministers on theological questions, or, if this be denied, at any rate that a section of them are more Liberal, and Thirdly, that they are more Liberal because they are national officers.

For, if it be not that the professional atmosphere and surroundings in the Established Church are larger and freer than those of the Voluntary Churches, it must be because the men themselves are by nature bigger men—more open to new light, more courageous, more tolerant—which I for one do not for a moment believe.

And so, to return to the point from which we started, I maintain, that in the event of disestablishment, there is every reason to fear that the work which Liberal professional theologians have done heretofore for the nation would be done no longer : for, when the Church has lost its national character, and been narrowed into a sect, we may expect that its clergy will, gradually perhaps, but certainly, become more and more like their Nonconformist brethren—not more Liberal probably in politics than they are now, and certainly less so in theology.

So far as one can judge from experience, the nation

would lose its Arnolds and Maurices, its Stanleys and Jowetts, without being by any means sure of getting Binneys in exchange. I give no opinion as to which kind of men are the more valuable to the nation. No one questions the value of either ; why not keep both ?

CHURCH RESISTANCE TO CHANGE.

But how do I reconcile my views with the fact that the history of the Established Church has been one of continual resistance to wholesome changes, and to the removal of unwholesome restraints. Well, I am not concerned to deny that there is much truth in this indictment, if we substitute the word clergy for Church ; but then to do so would contradict the very idea of a National Church. It is the indolence and apathy of the nation, represented by Parliament, which has enabled a majority of the national clergy to resist changes, and to perpetuate abuses. The nation has tried to shuffle off the duty of attending to its own highest business, and the usual penalties have followed. Let us take the last, and most prominent, instance of this state of things, the dragging on year after year of the Burials Bill controversy. No doubt there has been some excuse in this case for indolence and apathy on the nation's part, because the grievance is not one which has any great substance of reality in it, and Englishmen generally don't care to exert themselves much when it is only a question of giving a triumph to one or another set of somewhat narrow and unreasonable professional disputants. But when the poor straw had been threshed over again and

again, some modicum of grain was left on the floor. There remains a just claim on the part of Nonconformists who choose to exercise their right as English Christians of burying their dead in the National churchyards, that they should be free to use a service there which they do approve, and not one which they do not.

The lay Church conscience, in a lazy way, has come to acknowledge this at last, and to resolve that right shall be done. But Liberationists may say, the lay conscience has been very slow to recognise this right. True. But how would the question stand, if it had had to wait for the professional conscience? There is no sign whatever that the "No surrender" cry has lost its power with the body of the clergy, though a considerable number have been staunch advocates from the first of the national policy of welcoming their Nonconformist brethren to a full share in the common inheritance.

From this, and other instances which might be easily added, but which most readers will be able to supply for themselves, we may fairly conclude that Convocations, Synods, and other bodies composed mainly of Ecclesiastics, will share the disposition of other professional bodies, such as the Inns of Court, to take narrow professional, rather than broad national, views of questions which touch their own real, or supposed, interests. And it would seem to be a strange kind of reform, looking to national interests, to provide that, for the future, professions shall be left more to themselves, the nation abandoning even that control which it has hitherto exercised. Precisely the contrary method seems to be the truer and more wholesome

one, and, indeed, the only one which is in accord with the movement and tendency of modern life.

In short, all experience in England, if not elsewhere, warns us, that if resistance to wholesome changes, and to the removal of unwholesome restraint, in any department of national life is to be overcome, it must be by the nation. It is the nation which has kept the Church of England the widest of all religious communions, the one which has made more wholesome changes, and removed more unwholesome restraints, than any other, just because the nation has controlled the profession on all critical occasions. Let me remind you of one more typical instance, the action of the profession and of the nation at the time of the controversy on 'Essays and Reviews.' That controversy culminated in the prosecution of two of the clerical authors in the Arches Court, and afterwards, on appeal, before the Privy Council. The nation, represented by, and acting through, the highest Court of the realm, dismissed every one of the thirty-two original charges, although carefully abstaining from any expression of approval of the book, or of the views which they had thus solemnly declared to be lawful for ministers of the Church to hold. But, while the nation, scarcely concealing its apprehension of what it nevertheless felt itself constrained to bear with, stood thus firmly on the side of toleration and charity, no less than 11,000 of the clergy—a majority of the whole of the profession in 1865—joined in a declaration as to what "the whole Catholic Church holds without reserve or qualification." This precious document, if it

could have been made binding, would have driven probably a third of the clergy, and two-thirds of the laity, out of the National Church fourteen years ago. It was ignored : and so Canon Farrar, and other orthodox popular preachers, are now proclaiming without reserve or qualification, doctrines on "the Inspiration of Scripture," and "the everlasting punishment of the cursed" (the two crucial questions before the Privy Council on that trial) which are quite abreast of anything in 'Essays and Reviews,' but excite scarcely a murmur or remonstrance even in religious newspapers.

And so, looking back over our ecclesiastical history, who will be bold enough to assert, that any of the wholesome changes which have been made since the Toleration Act, would have been made at all, or any of the unwholesome restraints removed, by any ecclesiastical convention or synod ? But does what holds true of the Church apply with anything like equal force to the sects ? Has the governing body of any of the voluntary religious denominations of our country done anything in these trying times for the relief of the consciences of ministers or people, which can be named with the Subscription Act of 1865, by which the National Legislature freed the National clergy from the "unwholesome restraints" under which they had lain since the passing of the Act of Uniformity ?

So far at least as I am aware, the freedom which has thus been given by the nation to the Church, is looked upon rather with contempt by the Nonconformists, who regard the "general assent" now required of candidates for ordination as too colourless and

vague to be of any practical value, and immeasurably inferior to their own winnowing and sifting processes.

Liberationists are in the habit, indeed, of boasting of their greater freedom, but it is not easy to discover in what precise sense they use the word. For their clergy, instead of having the public law of their country to rely on, and govern themselves by, are bound to consult the wishes, and too often the whims and caprices, of bodies, whose resistance to change in doctrine, discipline, or ritual, is at least as strong as that of the clergy of the Establishment. No doubt there are amongst them men strong enough to make changes, and to defy their deacons, elders, or other authorities. Thus Mr. Spurgeon can afford to denounce deacons in language at least as arrogant as any addressed by the High Church newspapers to bishops, for daring to object to a change made in the order of his service, without their approval, by a brother Independent minister.

And, in this particular, Ritualism no doubt looks fondly towards Nonconformity. Mr. Spurgeon is practically as infallible as the Pope; can change the order and method of his services, and preach and do what he pleases. And it is this kind of freedom, envied by Ritualists, which makes the Abbé Martin exult that the dogma of Infallibility will not prove any great stumbling-block to them. "What is there in it which can long withhold them?" he writes, "an infallible Pope! Those amongst themselves whom they deem infallible may be counted by hundreds." While the *Rock* newspaper chafes over the same

phenomenon, "Mr. Mackonochie is infallible, so are Mr. Bennett, Dr. Lee, Dr. Pusey; all the Ritualists are infallible, in spite of the difficulties which divide them. Each priest is a pope to himself, and to his congregation."

THE LIBERATION SOCIETY.

I have said that, with all the respect which I sincerely entertain for many ardent members of the Liberation Society, I cannot look upon their movement as a thoroughly honest and *bonâ fide* one, for they march to some extent under false colours.

To begin then : take their name, and avowed object. They are Liberators ; persons who are banded together to set some other persons free : for, to talk about setting religion in the abstract free is nonsense. Who are these other persons ? Why, you ! they reply ; you, poor enslaved and deluded members of what you are pleased to call the National Church. It is out of regard and consideration for you, and for your Church, which we value very highly, and whose work, especially of late years, we cordially admire, that we desire to liberate you.

Well, that is very thoughtful and kind of you Liberationists ; but from what are you going to set us free ? From the interference and shackles of the State, is the reply. Good. But suppose we don't want, or ask for, your help in this direction, but hold it to be better for the Church of which we are members, as well as for the State of which we are members, that this interference, and these shackles as you call them,

should exist, then as they don't affect you, we would respectfully ask when it became the mission of advanced Liberals to free people against their will? There has arisen, indeed, I admit, in the National Church within the last two or three years, a party who are crying out for the severance of Church and State, so that at last the Liberationists may pose with some semblance of truth as deliverers, rescuers of the oppressed. But these oppressed are young priests, bent on defying authority, and asserting their priestly claims as a class—not precisely the persons whom Englishmen in general desire to see taken from under control.

But will Liberationists seriously pretend that they are pained by these grievances of these extreme Ritualist clergy? that they cannot possess their own souls or pulpits in peace because of the oppression of their Ritualist brethren of the Establishment, under the Public Worship Regulation Act? When it suits their purpose, there are no such stern denouncers of the Ritualists as they. I do not care to press this point; but when they extend their solicitude to us poor Church-folk generally, one feels inclined to commend to their consideration Hosea Biglow's remonstrance with his neighbours in the American civil war, when they cried out against Lincoln's proclamation of freedom to the slaves:

“ But why should we kick up a muss
 About the Pres'dent's proclamation?
 It ain't a-going to liberate us
 Ef we don't want no 'mancipation.
 The right to be a cussed fool
 Is free from all devices human,
 And common as a gin'r'l rule
 To every critter born of woman.”

It is no part of any Liberal programme that I ever heard of that my "right to be a cussed fool" should be meddled with, unless, indeed, it hinders my neighbour from being a wise man. Well, then, if the Liberationists can prove that *they* are hindered in preaching, praying, or any act of worship—from electing, paying, and disciplining their clergy and flocks in whatever way seems good to them—let them only make this clear to me, and I as a Liberal will help them to get the hindrance out of their paths, to knock off these "shackles," as they like to call them; only making it clear that it is off their ankles I am knocking them, and not off mine. So far they may fairly reckon on a united Liberal party with them, as they have already upon the Burials Bill, and, as I believe they will have in the future, when they claim the use of churches and cathedrals, under proper national control.

But when they pose as the deliverers of national Churchmen from the control of the nation in ecclesiastical affairs, the irony is not of a kind which is easy to appreciate, or likely to lead to any good result. The fact is, that this profession of consideration for the Church—this slide which the leaders of the Liberation Society are always ready to pull out when it seems to be the right one for the moment—imports a disagreeable element into the controversy. I don't pretend to like Mr. Spurgeon's methods of attack, and wonder that so good-natured and able a gentleman (not to say so eloquent and zealous a minister) should allow himself not only to say, but deliberately to print and circulate such things for instance as these, that

“to ravine like a wolf and to plunder like a freebooter has been the peculiar prerogative of the Church of England.” “No Church ever ate dirt more abundantly than our beloved Church of England ; her capacity for humiliation is infinite.” &c., &c.,

But this kind of talk does no harm at all to any one but the speaker, and is at any rate straightforward and above board, and therefore to my mind, even as a matter of taste, infinitely preferable to all the laboured expressions of anxiety for the good of the Church, in which other Liberationist leaders are in the habit of indulging.

And this want of straightforward candour seems to colour a great deal of the action and speech of the Society.—The subject is an unpleasant one, and it is with regret that I have to notice it in connection with the names of very able and earnest men, most of them, too, ministers of the Gospel. Nor do I for a moment believe that they are conscious of the insincerity in their advocacy which strikes bystanders. But when we find a man of the character and reputation of Mr. Dale, who, in addressing Churchmen is as soft spoken and complimentary as you please, permitting himself to appeal to the cupidity of the mob, in his eagerness to carry them to his conclusions, it is a sad proof of the lengths to which partisanship in this movement will lead even the best men.

Again and again Mr. Dale has protested that the Liberationists “repudiate the alliance of the baser passions,” that they have “no offers to tempt the unscrupulous or needy,” and yet he does not hesitate

to suggest to a great public meeting how much a head the revenues of the Church would come to if divided amongst the people. I will give the words to show that I am not exaggerating. The speech was made at Norwich. After alluding to the difficulty of estimating Church revenues, and taking them as between five and six millions a year, he goes on, "as Mr. Chamberlain said at Sheffield the other day, this means that if the revenues of the Church of England when the present vested interests expire were appropriated to local purposes, it would amount to about five shillings a head for every man, woman, and child. I am told that a penny rate in Norwich produces about £1200 a year, and if you had these ecclesiastical revenues for the city they would equal the sum raised by a 1s. 6d. rate. This is a practical reason for getting them. I don't know what you would do with the money if you had it," &c. &c.

Mr. Dale's example is followed by other Liberatorist orators, whom I do not quote, because, as he probably would be allowed in all respects to stand first amongst them, there is no need to strengthen the case by the example of smaller men. Any of you who care to pursue the inquiry farther may find the subject fully treated in a pamphlet, entitled, 'The Curiosities of Liberation Literature,' by the Rev. E. Whitehouse, where the inconsistent and contradictory views and arguments of their writers and speakers are brought together, and ranged in parallel columns.

I only note this particular instance because it bears

on that part of the subject which is likely to excite most interest in the country, and shows how Liberationists are in the habit of fighting their battle. They have two or three views as to Church property, which is represented at one time as given *to* the nation for religious purposes ; at another as given *by* the nation to a favoured sect ; sometimes as having a voluntary, at other times a compulsory origin. But it is not on differences of opinion upon such difficult subjects as the origin of tithes, &c., that we have a right to look for consistent views. What we have a right to ask is that they shall not fight under two or three different flags, as to the application of Church property in the future. It belongs to the nation, they say generally, so let the nation declare what shall be done with it, to which doctrine I for one do not object. But the Liberation Society it seems is to be the nation's teacher in this great business. "We," says Mr. Dale, speaking for the Society, "mean to pursue our great enterprise, until the time shall come—it is not far distant—when the principles of which it is our glory to be the representatives and the guardians, shall control the legislation and the policy of our country."

Those who take such high ground may surely be asked to say upon which set of principles they mean to stand. When they control the legislation and policy of our country they may of course either appropriate the revenues of the National Church to some kind of religious uses, or to the relief of rates, or other purely secular purposes. But as long as they try to ride both horses at once, plain folks may well be excused

for looking with some distrust on them, and the movement they represent.

Politically, no doubt, it is not a bad position, because while occupying it they can hold out one hand to secularists pure and simple, and the other to reforming, or discontented, Churchmen. But it does not commend itself in ordinary men to the high moral sense to which Liberationists are in the habit of appealing.

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Since these pages have been in the press an article has been published by Mr. Guinness Rogers, which illustrates in a striking manner what seems to me the extraordinary incapacity of the Liberationist leaders for understanding the position of Liberal Churchmen. The article referred to is a criticism upon, and reply to, Mr. W. E. Forster's speech at Bradford in December, 1877, and may, I suppose, be fairly taken as an official document, expressing the views and carrying the weight of the Liberation Society.

In the course of this paper Mr. Rogers finds himself confronted by the parochial argument, which Mr. Forster cited as one which had had great weight with himself. How, he had argued, except by a national organisation covering the whole country, can you insure that the spiritual needs of remote and poor districts shall be met? At any rate the National Church *does* provide for these.

Yes, replies Mr. Rogers, that may be all true enough. "There may be few, if any districts in which there is not a clergyman accessible to all ; but there

are hundreds of cases in which he is provided by Christian willinghood, not by public taxation." (*Nineteenth Century*, p. 524.)

But how, one asks, in astonishment, does this affect the question? It does not seem to occur to Mr. Rogers for a moment that "Christian willinghood" can be possible in a religious organisation, open to elect and non-elect alike, and supported (as he somewhat inaccurately puts it) "by public taxation." These hundreds of clergy "provided by Christian willinghood," must then, by some subtle process which I am unable to follow, be kept distinct from the national clergy. And I can quite see how important this is to Mr. Rogers' case; for, if the National Church has a right to count them amongst her officers, it is obvious that the "Christian willinghood" which is the mainstay of the sects is no less potent in the Establishment.

Possibly he might refer to the next passage in the same article as containing the key to his view, and explaining in what sense he would deny the name of National clergy to all those who are not supported by tithes (to which I presume he refers when he speaks of "public taxation"). "The State," he writes (p. 524), "has given up the attempt to work out the old idea of an Establishment, and the practical outcome is that the adherents of the Church of England supplement the public provision." The Church has given up nothing. The old idea of Establishment remains precisely what it has always been.

Certain individual Churchmen have come forward to

do this good supplementary work, but they have only been able to do it, or allowed to do it, by means of national machinery, and by presenting the nation with the large sums necessary for the purpose. And, so far from it being the fact that the State has given up the attempt to work out the idea of an Establishment, we have only to glance at what has been done, and is in progress, in subdividing dioceses and parishes, and bringing the national spiritual machinery up to a level with the work, to convince ourselves that there was never more "Christian willinghood" in the nation, or a stronger feeling that Church work is of no private, but of a national character.

If one, or a dozen, or fifty Englishmen join together, and find funds for building a church, and endowing it, they cannot move a step towards their object except through the machinery provided by the State. They must comply with a number of conditions prescribed by statute before they can obtain assistance or recognition from the State: but, when they have complied with them that assistance and recognition is forthcoming. The utmost that the Liberationists can maintain with any truth is, that the State has given up providing money by taxation for this part of the nation's public business. No doubt, if they could go on to say, "the State no longer supplies the necessary funds, and so they are not forthcoming, and never will be till you give up your foolish ideal; then you will see what the free hand of voluntarism will do for you," the position would be a strong one. But unluckily for their case

the precise contrary is true. The old parochial machinery is still vigorous throughout the country, maintaining its place in the constitution with less friction than almost any other part of the going gear, and adapting itself easily to new conditions of life, while, wherever readjustments of that machinery are needed, the extra bands, wheels, and oil are either already in hand (in the shape of such funds as Queen Anne's Bounty, and the property vested in the Ecclesiastical and Charity Commissioners), or are found by "Christian willinghood." In either case the new machinery becomes a part of the national trust property, held by national officers, for national purposes.

In the case of a like effort on the part of Wesleyans or Baptists, the new machinery also becomes trust property, but the trusts are limited to certain specified persons, and classes of persons, while the nation is carefully excluded from any share in the benefits ; and, as far as possible, from any control over the administration or disposition of the property.

"Christian willinghood" is an admirable thing in both cases, but surely not less so where it works for a distinctly national object.

A BROAD CHURCHMAN.

(Extract from Address on Charles Kingsley, delivered to the Midland Institute, December 3, 1877.)

But there are other sides of his ministry of more importance at the present moment (and especially in this place) to which I must devote the short time that

is left me. A time of trial is at hand in England for the faith which Kingsley held so firmly, and for the Church of which he was so loving and loyal an officer. It should, I think, be the first duty of one who is asked to speak of the man to such an audience as this, to bring out as well as he can his views upon the great issues which, threatening in his time, are now apparently upon us in earnest.

The first of these is the question of a National Church. Is it for good, or for evil, that this nation has for a thousand years maintained what we call an establishment of religion? What did Charles Kingsley hold as to this?

I am aware of course that I am speaking in a city which is the stronghold of those who answer that question with a confident and passionate, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground." But I cannot believe that where so much has been done to honour this man, and to perpetuate his teaching in other directions—where, as is proved by my own presence here this evening, and the audience which fills this hall, men and women are anxious still to dwell on his memory, and keep it alive,—there will be any unwillingness to hear and consider what he had to say upon a subject, which he had thought on as carefully, and which was even nearer his heart, than sanitary reform. First, then, let me give you one or two quotations, which will, I think, put you at once in a position to understand his view of the matter. Writing to Thomas Cooper the Chartist (of whom he had made a steadfast friend by generous aid in his

sorest need, and who had sent him a copy of his 'Plain Pulpit Talk'), Kingsley says: "I see in it the thorough, right old morality—common to Puritans, old Anglican Churchmen, apostles and prophets—that you hold right to be infinitely right, and wrong infinitely wrong; that you call a spade a spade, and talk to men about the real plagues of their own hearts. My dear friend, go on and do that, and, whether you call yourself Baptist or Buddhist, I shall welcome you as one who is doing the work of God, and fighting in the battle of the Lord, who makes war in righteousness. But more—you are no Buddhist, not even an Unitarian. I happen to be, from reason and science, as well as from Scripture and Catholic tradition, an orthodox theologian, and to value orthodoxy more the more I think, for its own sake. And it was a solid pleasure to me to find you orthodox. But my dear friend, whatever you do, don't advocate disestablishing us. We are the most liberal religious body in these realms. In our pale men can meet who can meet nowhere else. Would to God you belonged to us, and we had your powers, as we might have without your altering your creed, with us. But if we—the one remaining root of union—we disestablish, and become a sect like the sects, then competition, not Christ, will be God, and we shall bite and devour one another, till atheism and M. Comte are the rulers of modern thought." This was the mature judgment of his last years, written in 1872. Fifteen years earlier he wrote to Mr. Evan Franks: "As to your being an Independent, sir,

what's that to me, provided you—as I see well you do—do justly, and love mercy, and walk humbly with your God? I don't think you will ever find the freedom in your communion which you would in ours, the freest, thank God, in the world; but I should be a second Ham if I had no respect for the Independents. For why? My forefathers were Independents, and fought by Cromwell's side at Naseby and Marston Moor; and, what is worse, lost broad acres by their Puritanism."

Again, to one who had written to him on the abuses and anomalies in the National Church, he writes: "If you are dissatisfied with the Church of England, so am I. Stay in it, then, and try to mend it. But let your emendations be consistent with the part that is yet pure. To Romanize the Church is not to reform it. To unprotestantize it is not to reform it."

Thus you see he was perfectly tolerant of and in sympathy with what he recognised as honest and faithful Christian profession, by whatever name it might be called. Indeed, it was only against Phari-saism, against any attempt to limit or appropriate to a favoured few, what was meant for mankind, that his whole soul rose up in stern, often in fierce, protest.

The one thing he could not away with, was the doctrine, which he sorrowfully recognized to be creeping into Calvinistic and Evangelical, as well as into the high Church pulpits in these days, "the message," as he put it, "that the devil and not Jesus Christ is the Lord of the present world, that men are

sent into this life to get their souls saved in the next ; that the soil is not Christ's but man's ; that the State has nothing to do with religion, or parsons with politics ; that property has no absolute and essential duties towards Christ (why should it if it be not the Lord who giveth the power to get wealth), but only works of supererogation in the shape of alms or charity, and district visiting ; that God is not the father, or Christ the Lord of all men, but only of a chosen few, whether 'episcopally baptized' ones, or 'the converted' or 'the elect' matters little, in practice or in spiritual truth—in a word, all that Manichæan practical atheism of which Rome is the systematized embodiment, and which is now proving what its unconscious parentage was, by leading people, the children of Evangelicals especially, to Rome from whence it came."

This "practical atheism of Romish birth," was to be met by the assertion of the holiness of "that spiritual one body called the English nation," and that assertion could only be made effectually by "the nation organised for spiritual purposes," or, in other words, by a national Church. Therefore (as his last curate tells us), he was never tired of quoting the words, "as by law established," and gloried in the feeling that he was a national officer—a soldier in England's spiritual army.

This intensely national spirit was not incompatible with the longing for a larger, or Catholic, unity, an aspiration (as he tells Mr. Maurice) which he at times thrust away even fiercely—when he thought of what it

had come to in Rome—as impossible and a phantom, and then found himself so much meaner, more careless of everything worth having, that he always went back to the old dream.

But nevertheless a dream he felt the idea of a universal Church to be, for any practical purpose, so far as he and his generation were concerned ; whereas the national idea was there before him, a practical fact. In the National Church, of which he was a member and officer, he recognized a perfect unity in theory, and a very remarkable unity in fact. As he pointed out to Thomas Cooper and other Nonconformists, the English Church, just because it is national, because it inherits and represents that form of Christianity which the nation has accepted, and offers to every English child as its birthright, because it is not an ecclesiastically but a nationally governed body, is the only organisation which can assert and uphold the highest life, of “that spiritual one body called the English nation.”

It was this which he valued above all other things, this consecration, not of one or another select portion, but of the whole body, to the service of his master. Nothing pained him more than to be misunderstood in this matter, as so often happened to him, at the hands of friendly, as well as hostile, critics. To one of these, a personal friend, who had used the words “muscular Christianity” in speaking of his works, he writes : “My dear Sir, I know of no Christianity save one, which is the likeness of Christ, and the same for all men, viz., to be transformed into the likeness of

Christ, and to consecrate to His service as far as may be, all the powers of body, soul and spirit, regenerate and purified by His Spirit." And as he strove to make each man and woman realize that no part of them is unholy, that their flesh, as well as their intellect and spirit, is redeemed by Christ for His service, so he strove and pleaded with and for the nation, that it should not cut itself up into natural and supernatural, secular and religious, sections, but should frankly and with open eye acknowledge, that every portion of it is redeemed for God's service, "who takes care not of churches only but of states, not of religious only but of political and scientific events."

And so, tolerant as he was of religious differences, he never flinched from maintaining that the sect principle, viz., "we have bound ourselves together on opinions as to Christ," is the natural antagonist to the true principle, of Church as of nation, viz., "God has bound this whole people together in one divine society." And, repugnant and painful as the idea of the separation of the Church from the nation was to him in his life, I am sure it would be ten times more so now, when that separation is called for, not only by those who avowedly prefer the sect principle—who desire to see the Church turned into a sect limited to those who agree in opinions, and the nation left to mind its own business of protecting body and goods, without interfering in higher matters—but by those who, hating the sect principle, are ready to risk turning their own Church into a sect, for the chance of asserting for it supernatural gifts and graces

as an universal body, which, if they could be maintained, would bring family and national life bound and suppliant to its feet.

Against this putting asunder what God has joined, his whole life was a faithful and earnest protest.

I trust that in thus endeavouring to put before you the position which Charles Kingsley occupied on the question of the connection of Church and State, I have not unduly trespassed on the ground of party polemics, from which I should desire, even more anxiously than he himself would have done, to keep his name clear. If I have in any respect failed, let the blame rest on me, and not on his memory.

LAXITY OF DOCTRINE.

Every reader who is at all familiar with the literature of this great controversy will have recognized how much I am indebted to the writings of Dean Stanley for many of the principles and views which are maintained in these addresses. I desire here, and always, to acknowledge this obligation in the fullest manner, and as the question of the laxity and vagueness of the present form of subscription in the National Church, and what is often represented as the consequent dangerous and scandalous latitudinarianism of her ministry, has been referred to more than once in these pages, I venture to reprint, for the benefit and pleasure of readers, a famous passage from the Dean's writings, first published twenty-eight years ago, but which cannot be too often repeated, or too carefully

considered, by all those who can rise above party mists and sectarian squabbles, and are looking for some broader and firmer ground to stand upon as Christians and as Englishmen, than Liberationists or Ritualists can offer.

After criticising the action of the High Church assailants of Mr. Gorham, and alluding to the Frenchman's remark, that, while all Europe was rocking and trembling under the shock of great ideas, the only revolution which seemed to have any interest for benighted England was the revolution of "le pere Gorham," he goes on: "We have dwelt on the historical certainty of the fact that the Church of England was meant to include, and that it always has included, opposite and contradictory opinions, not only on the point now in dispute (baptismal regeneration) but on other points as important or more important than this. We have dwelt also on the inestimable value, if not absolute necessity, of retaining this position, as the best means of dealing with the peculiar mission of a National Church, especially of a National Church in England in these times. But we feel that there is a yet higher ground to be taken, that there is a sanction and an example of our position almost too solemn to be insisted on in a temporary argument, were it not for the greatness of the interests at stake, and for the sincerity, in many instances, of the scruples which such a position excites in those who have not considered it from its true point of view.

"In the second of those vigorous, though mistaken letters, which have drawn down upon Mr. Maskell the

anger of hundreds less plain-spoken or clear-sighted than himself; after an examination of the various points on which he truly conceives the Church of England to have expressed no dogmatic opinion, there occurs this (in his view) final and fatal question: Has the world ever seen—does there now exist anywhere—another example of a religious sect or community which does not take one side or the other clearly and distinctly, upon at least a very large proportion of the doctrines of which we have been speaking?

“Yes, the world has seen one example, at least, of a religious community, whose highest authorities did refuse to take one side or the other clearly and distinctly on the questions which were brought for their decision. There was once a Council in which, ‘after much disputing,’ it was determined ‘not to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear,’ and to whom ‘it seemed good to lay upon the Church no greater burden than these necessary things, from which if the brethren keep themselves they shall do well.’ There was once a Conference of ‘those who seemed to be the pillars of the Church,’ to decide the claims between the two rival sections of the Christian community, of whom we are told that when they perceived that ‘he who wrought effectually on one side, the same was mighty also on the other side, they gave to both the right hand of fellowship, that each should go unto his own peculiar sphere.’ There was once a Controversy which distracted the Church with ‘doubtful disputations,’ and the answer which came from an authority,

now revered by the whole Christian world, was a decision which decided nothing, except that each party might be left to its own convictions, however opposite and contradictory they might be. 'Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.' It is to the principle, not the subject-matter, of such decisions, that our attention is directed. The controversy to which they related, different as it was to those of modern times, agitated the 'Apostolic Church' no less fiercely, and was invested by the contending parties with no less importance. It is enough for our purpose to learn that the Church of the first century gloried in the freedom which is now regarded as a disgrace, and directed its earliest and most energetic efforts, not to the enforcement of a rigid conformity, but to the toleration of wide diversities. It was, indeed, no empty figment of speech which in that early age of Christianity recalled the image of the ark prepared against the flood. It is not an empty boast that we have now within our reach, and it will be no imaginary guilt if we, of our own accord, refuse to maintain, a system which shares in however imperfect a measure, one characteristic attribute of that perfect Church, which was to float visibly on the stormy waters, and gather within itself the characters of various conditions, opinions, and

tempers, who fled to it for shelter from the waves of this troublesome world. The Church of England, however, in this respect, unlike the churches of Rome or Geneva, may console itself with the reflection that it presents a likeness, however faint, to the Church of the Apostolic age."

DISESTABLISHMENT NOT DENATIONALIZATION.

It is well to look all contingencies in the face, so let us suppose the cry for disestablishment and disendowment to be successful, and consider whether, even in that case, the Church need abandon her national character and become a sect. Her distinctive mark hitherto has been, that she has a message, not for this or that section, but for the whole nation; that she has, apart altogether from material property, certain possessions, such as her Orders and her Common Prayer, which she holds in trust for the nation. How far, then, can this be altered by any possible legislation?

The aim of a disestablishing Parliament will be to reduce her to an exact equality with the sects. How, then, is this to be done?

The first step will be to place her ministry in the same position as that of the sects. The State cannot say there shall be no bishops, but only that they shall not, as bishops, sit in the House of Lords. If this change were made, the Houses of Parliament must remain open to the clergy of the Church, as citizens, as they are now open to Dissenting ministers,

lawyers, soldiers, merchants, and others: in which case both the nation and the profession would be gainers. One of the strongest influences which tend to keep the clergy a separate caste would disappear. The bishops would, as a rule, be left free for the higher part of their work, in their own dioceses; while the country would probably get the services in political life of a most valuable class of men—the clergy of independent means. There would be nothing in such a change as this to affect the national character of the Church.

The Ecclesiastical Courts must either be abolished, and the jurisdiction over Church trusts and disputes transferred to the Court of Chancery, which already exercises jurisdiction over Dissenting trusts: or the Ecclesiastical Courts must be reformed, and the jurisdiction over Dissenting trusts transferred to them. In neither case would the national character of the Church be affected.

The question whether the use of the churches should be allowed to Dissenting bodies would raise a difficult point. In the case we are contemplating, of an effort to place the Church and the sects on an exact equality, the well known principle would come in, that they who seek equity (or equality) must do equity, and, tried by this test, the claim of Dissenters will, scarcely stand. It is unfair and unequal, they say to the legislature, that one section only of the nation should have the custody and use of national buildings; open them to us. In the supposed case, the legislature would reply, these buildings are held

as national property, and the use of them is given to all those who will accept it, subject to the control of the nation in Parliament, and to such conditions as the nation may from time to time impose on their use. Are you ready to accept such national control, and to conform to such conditions? If so, we will arrange for your admission: if not, you are kept out, not by the nation, but by yourselves. I should be glad myself that the sects should answer, Yes, we will conform to such conditions; but, until they do, it is idle to talk of equality being outraged in this matter.

With respect to rates, the National Church and the sects are on an equality already. We all pay rates that chapels, as well as churches, may be exempt from them. This exemption would seem scarcely compatible with Nonconformist principles, but Liberal Churchmen will not care to inquire how this form of State aid is less objectionable to their Nonconforming brethren than any other. They will rather rejoice to see all the Voluntary Churches accepting Establishment in this form, at any rate, and content to allow the nation to recognize them in this practical way, even though they refuse in return to acknowledge the nation.

The same difficulty would confront Parliament at once in dealing with endowments as with buildings. How are they to be equalised as between denominations, when the Nonconformists refuse to take any part in them? There would be obvious inequality and injustice in refusing them their proportion, if

they claimed it, and were ready to submit to Parliamentary control, and to bring their own endowments "into hotchpot" to obtain it. There is none until they do this.

And so on, through every branch of the question the same principle runs, and the more it is studied, the more clearly it comes out, that it is not the nation, or the Church which the nation controls, but the Non-conformists themselves, who make equality in this sense impossible. The State, or nation, holds certain material properties of different kinds in trust for Spiritual uses, and lays down certain rules and conditions under which those properties are to be held and enjoyed by those who will voluntarily conform to the rules and accept the conditions. Those who will not, themselves make the inequality of which they complain.

Our supposed disestablishing Parliament might no doubt cut the Gordian knot by sweeping away all religious endowments of every kind, and applying them to secular purposes: but then, as great part of Church endowments, though national, are earmarked as precisely as Nonconformist endowments, these last would have to go too if there is to be absolute equality.

Finally, to make the dissolution perfect, so far as Parliament could do so, I presume that the Church would have to be incorporated and dismissed with some species of trust deed, defining her constitution in future, as that of the Wesleyan community is defined. But, after all this, and when Parliament had

done all that even Parliament has power to do, I fail to see how equality in the Liberationist sense would have been reached, or the Church turned into a sect.

Suppose the law allowed a man who had lived with his wife hitherto, and been very liberal to her in the matter of allowances and pin money, to turn her out of doors, and say, Henceforth you are no wife of mine, and I never wish to see your face, or hear your voice, again. Here are these odds and ends of property to which you are possibly entitled, and which I hereby declare by this deed of divorce to be absolutely your own to deal with precisely as you please ; so now all bond between us is at an end. Even in such a case the wife might reply : You cannot effect your purpose. It took my consent as well as yours to make us one, and without my consent as well as yours we can't be made two. I mean to remain loyal to you in word and deed, and to hold these shreds of property, and any I may become possessed of hereafter, on the same trusts for you and your children, as though I were still acknowledged by you and living in your house. Under such circumstances it seems obvious enough that nothing the man could do would really effect his object ; no human will or decree could alter facts, and the woman who had been his wife could never be made to him precisely as other women.

And so in the case of the Church and the sects. In the supposed case, after the State had given the Bill of Divorce, if the Church remained loyal, and declared that whatever scraps of material property might be thrown to her, together with the spiritual property of

her Common Prayer, her Services, Orders, and the rest, she would continue to hold, as heretofore, upon trust for every parish in England, and for every parishioner in each parish—for every man, woman, and child in the nation, whether the State consented or did not consent, she would remain still truly national, not indeed in Establishment, which is accidental, but in object which is essential.

An Established Church may be (as of old in Ireland) an Established sect. A Disestablished Church might well remain truly national, unless it made itself into a sect by voluntarily narrowing its own trusts. And I would fain hope and believe, that, under no possible circumstances, will the Church of England ever be guilty of such a piece of folly and stupidity.

VIII.

CHURCH CONGRESSES.

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND
DISSENT.

AT the last, and most important, of our Annual Church Congresses, I was asked to speak on the subject of the Relations between the Church and Dissent. The time allowed was only ten minutes, and I must admit that my ten minutes were in great measure wasted, for I was led aside into paths which I had no intention of treading, and so had to leave unsaid almost all that I came prepared to say. I reprint the speech here, however, partly because it has been the subject of much comment, and I desire to say deliberately that there is nothing in it which, after all that has been said against it, I wish to retract; but mainly, because I am permitted to append to it the best speech, which, so far as I know, has yet been made on the subject of Church Congresses. I am glad to be able to leave my readers at the end in a higher and healthier atmosphere than they have had, of necessity, to breathe in the earlier pages of this book.

SPEECH AT THE CHURCH CONGRESS AT
CROYDON.

In order to make clear what I have to say about the relations between the Church and Dissent, I must endeavour in the first place to state distinctly the standpoint from which I and those who agree with me look upon ours, as a national Church. It has been, of course, and is, in one sense, a Catholic Church. If we mean by that a portion of the great body of Christian worshippers throughout the world it is to utter a truism ; but the moment we get beyond that none of us can agree. ["No, no."] Well, at any rate, we can all agree that it is a national Church ; and your Grace knows, as well as anybody, perhaps, that those amongst whom I have been educated and brought up hold that to be a very noble name. We have learnt that the nation is holy as well as the Church ; that God cares about the nation just as He cares about the Church ; that Christ is the King of the nation as well as the Head of the Church. Believing this, as I do, you may imagine the astonishment—I may almost say the dismay—with which persons who concur in the views I have just stated, must read some of the remarks which apparently have been received with applause in this hall. I hold in my hand a statement which was made yesterday in a paper read by a dignitary, who was supposed, I presume, to represent the strongest body in the Church of England. He said that the standard of prosperity of Church and State is essentially different ; that the State prospers

when its members increase and are wealthy ; the Church when its disciples are conformed to the example of its great Head. [Cheers.] Well, my friends, I do not perhaps interpret rightly what that applause means, but if it means that the standard of prosperity of the Church and State ought not to be the same, I confess that applause startles and astonishes me. Why, I have always believed that this warning the world to keep its distance, is precisely the standard of the sects, and not of the Church. I have understood that it is sects that divide things secular and religious, and that they say the nation is not holy, that God is not caring for this English nation as He cared for the Jewish nation of old. I have always believed that this was the touchstone of the position of the sects and not of the Church. I have been taught by great divines to regard the Church of England as the nation in its relations with the invisible. I believe it to be the organisation of the highest national life. I may be asked how does this theory tally with the fact that those sects of whom I am speaking and for whom I entertain great respect, all deny it as much as this dignitary of the Church denied it in his paper on Wednesday last ? The denial, I am told, comes from all sides ; but, my friends, the denial will not alter the fact. Supposing that all of us choose to deny that we are Englishmen, can that alter the fact of our nationality ? Because I do not choose to be called an Englishman, and refuse, so far as I can, to submit to the conditions of English citizenship, can that make

me less an Englishman? I see at once, from indications of feeling in this hall, that my view is not shared by many of you; but it is nevertheless, a view which I can vouch to be, from my own knowledge, held by many who belong to the Church, and who are not less earnest members of it than you yourselves. While the English Church lasts, Englishmen, whatever we choose to say, cannot take themselves outside it. So long as there is a national Church, surely my friends on the platform, and all of you in the hall, will agree that, in theory, at all events, it should embrace the whole of the nation; and therefore, I say, while it exists it is no more possible for people to unmake that unity because they wish to unmake it than it is to unmake their nationality to which they were born. They may return to it and acknowledge it, but they cannot unmake it.

What is the duty, then, of the national Church under these circumstances? Surely it is the duty of the nation and the Church to make the return to unity as easy as possible to all those who are outside. Are we doing that? My friends on the platform say "Yes." I wish I could agree with them with any truth; but I confess that that is not the conviction which has come home to me from an anxious study of this subject. The nation in past times has settled the form of Christianity which it thinks best for this people of England. ["No, no."] At any rate, that is my view; and I would only ask, if the nation has not done this, who has? The nation has formulated that Christianity in its Articles and its Prayer Book. If the

nation has not done it, I should like to know who has? I should like to know what is the meaning of the Common Prayer Book at all, unless it is the Prayer Book that has been recognised by this nation? The nation has placed churches and national officers in every parish. My friends cry "No, no!" Well, I should like to know who has placed them in the different parishes of this country if it be not the nation? At any rate, that is my belief; and those who think with me hold these to be the most precious characteristics of our national Church. The clergy are the officers and guardians of that national Church, and how are they doing their duty? I admit that they are doing their duty nobly in many ways, and I speak as one who is not only cordially but most intimately connected with the clergy, the national officers of the Church, for my grandfather was a clergymen, my brother is a clergyman—I have very many relations who are clergymen. All the most intimate friends I have had in my life, whom I have at present, are amongst the clergy; and no one honours them or their work more highly than I do; but for all that I am bound to acknowledge that that inheritance of which I am speaking is in danger, and that danger is mainly due to the conduct of the clergy in their relations with the Dissent of this country. They have become too professional in a narrow sense, they are separating themselves too much from the nation in general, and particularly from that portion of it which is outside their own lines, I mean their Nonconformist brethren. They seem to forget

that after all they are *servi servorum Dei*; that they are to minister not only to their own immediate congregations, like the Dissenting ministers, but to every Englishman who may desire their services. I speak from my own conscientious view of what is the real state of the case. Let me by a couple of illustrations show what is the policy pursued by the clergy, which I think is endangering this most precious part of our inheritance. I would refer to two questions which have lately come under their consideration. There is the title of "Reverend"—the title which has been appropriated by the nation to the ministers of Christ in this country. A Nonconformist minister claimed that title, and you all know what happened. Instead of the clergy of the Church of England saying, "By all means, you are a minister of the Church of Christ—and we are only too glad that you come forward and claim the national title set apart by the nation for that ministry." ["No, no."] I told you, my friends, that I looked at these questions from this point of view as a layman, and I am only letting you know what I as a layman think you clergy ought to have done in this business.

Then take the burials question. I confess, when the reverend gentleman read the first paper just now, and touched on that subject, I was astonished at the response with which his remarks were received. It seems to me and to all laymen ["No, no"]—to all laymen whom I know—they may not be known to you, but there are many more than you appear to imagine—at any rate, they look on this burials

question as virtually settled. We think you ought to welcome Englishmen who come forward and claim their portion in the national burying-grounds of this country, and join in making easy conditions for their admission. ["No, no."] I anticipated that response to such a statement. If the clergy or this assembly think that the opinion of the country is with them, I believe they will find they are grievously and sorely mistaken. Let me illustrate my view in another way. There is a national army in England. That national army has the charge of the parade grounds, ranges, and the other military machinery in the country. A great army of volunteers has come forward and are desiring to share these ranges and these military properties with the national army of this country. This movement has been going on now for eighteen years. I happen to have seen a good deal of it; and I can only say that where there have been wise national officers who have put those facilities and advantages as far as possible at the disposal of those who come forward as volunteers in the same cause as themselves, they have entirely carried with them those volunteer bodies, and have been able to do almost whatever they pleased in educating them professionally. Let me show how that bears upon the relations of the Church of England with Dissent. There is a clergyman—I wish I could call him a friend—with whom I have the honour of a slight acquaintance, who was appointed two years ago to a town in the north of England, which was almost entirely filled with Dissenters. It was, indeed, a stronghold of the Liberation Society,

and this autumn the Society proposed to hold a meeting in that town. But the different Nonconformist congregations sent to the Liberation Society, and said if they came none of the congregations could attend, because they would think it disrespectful to their vicar, of whom they were very proud, to do so. It was not by taking the line, which seems to be the popular line here on the Burials Bill, that that result was obtained. While this Congress has been sitting there has been a similar gathering of one of the great Nonconformist communities of this country—that of the Baptist Union. It is now sitting, I believe, at Newport. I was reading the remarks of the Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, in a sermon which he preached at the opening of that meeting. He there urges, that denominationalism forms the strength, and not the weakness, of the Church. Well, of course, I cannot myself agree with that ; but, at any rate, I do say that constant, friendly relations with the Nonconformist bodies would act as a spur to zeal. The ideal, of course, is unity. Will these bodies come back to the Church ? I am sorry to say it seems as though scarcely anybody in this room, except Mr. Harwood and myself, has the slightest hope of such a result as that, and I quite admit that considerable changes will have to be made, and great courage shown, by the Church if that union is to take place. I, for instance, believe that we must alter our Articles if the Union is to be brought about. [“ No, no.”] I hear dissent to that, but I should feel glad if it were done, because, in reading them through, I recognise them as a venerable and

most valuable document—a document which was of the greatest service at the time it was prepared by the wise Churchmen of those days—but for us, I must say, it is certainly obsolete. I will mention only one Article, and ask any Churchman in this hall whether he cordially and *bonâ fide* accepts its teaching. I mean the Thirteenth, which says that works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of His Spirit, have no doubt the nature of sin. I do not believe there are many persons in this room who do not think that, if we are to get back to the unity we ought to desire, we shall have to alter not only the Articles, but also other portions of the Prayer Book. I do not believe the alterations will be at all extensive, and I think that, with wisdom, they may very well be made. Wisdom and courage will be necessary ; and wisdom and courage we must have, if we are to retain the national Church in this country. I believe that we are quite as competent as our fathers to reform it, and that God is just as much with the nation now as He was then. If we set to work in the spirit in which they set to work, I believe we shall, by God's help, be able also to provide, once more, a new framework for the Church, which will make it again, as it once was, the worthy national Church of the people of England.

IX.

THE BODY OF CHRIST.*

"He is the head of the body, the Church."—COL. i. 18.

THE annual "Church Congress," held during the last few days, has attracted public attention more strongly than the similar meetings of former years. This Congress, it should be clearly understood, is a purely voluntary gathering. It does not even represent a permanent association, as other congresses generally do. A local Committee, under the presidency of the Bishop of the Diocese, makes all the arrangements, and has the entire responsibility, for the meetings of the Congress week. The meetings are attended by any persons, Church people or Non-conformists, who procure themselves tickets of admission. Those who attend them hear short addresses on selected topics by selected readers or speakers. The feature which gives its special interest to a Church Congress is that care has always been taken by the local Committee to bring together representatives of

* Preached at Christ Church, St. Marylebone, October 14th, 1877, by the Rev. J. Llewelyn Davies.

the different parties or schools in the Church of England. The attractiveness and success of the meetings depend to a considerable extent on the thoroughness with which this policy is carried out; and the chief usefulness of the Congresses, in the eyes of the Bishops and other eminent persons who promote them, is understood to consist in their thus bringing together on the same platform, and on terms of mutual courtesy and Church fellowship, those whom party conflict is apt to divide very much from each other.

It is obvious that, having this voluntary and irresponsible character, it is only in a very qualified sense that a Church Congress can be held to be representative of the Church of England as a whole. But it is so, in respect of the choice of speakers and the free publicity of the meetings; and the presidency, this year, of the highest dignitary of the Church, and of a man so comprehensive in his views as Archbishop Tait, has given to the Congress at Croydon more of the character of a representative assembly than any preceding Congress has been able to claim.

I refer to the Congress now, as thus bringing the *Church* before our minds. Those who occupied its platforms were looked upon as representing the Church of England; they spoke much about the Church,—about its nature, its prerogatives, its dangers, its tasks. The Church of England, they would all have agreed in saying, is a branch of the Church of Christ. But what is the Church of Christ? When this question is asked among Churchmen or Christians, great divergences of opinion begin to appear. It

evidently was so at Croydon ; and we may turn to account the name and the discussions of the Church Congress by asking the question for ourselves, and trying to see how the Apostolic teaching would start us on the way to the most scriptural views on this subject.

The Church is the Body of Christ,—we are all agreed in accepting this statement, which we find given repeatedly in the New Testament.

There are those who go on to say that the Church has therefore a supernatural character. They insist strongly on this term supernatural,—a word unknown to Holy Scripture, and which it has been no gain to theology to add to the scriptural vocabulary. This supernatural body, they say, is an organised society, living on from age to age, with officers and institutions and functions belonging to it by the conditions of its creation, and intrusted with gifts and graces which it alone has power to dispense. It finds itself placed, supernatural as it is, in a natural world. Human beings as living together in civil bonds form, it is held, a natural society. What a difference there must be, then, between the Church and the world ! Imagine the superiority which a supernatural society must have over one that is merely natural ! When minds have become thoroughly imbued with this feeling, it is no wonder that they come to look on all human things that are not ecclesiastical with a sort of disdain. The Church is supernatural, the State is natural. What an intolerable intrusion and usurpation it must be, if the State asserts any right within the province

of the Church ! A mere aggregation of mortal men assuming to control Christ and his body ! And this is precisely the light in which many persons are now training themselves to regard much that has been done and is going on in this country under our existing constitution in Church and State. That a Judicial Court appointed by authority of Parliament and the Crown should decide on disputed points of ritual is, in their eyes, the natural body dictating to the supernatural. The Body of Christ in this country, it is taken for granted, is the Church of England. But it has been of late years a cause of great and increasing distress to those who hold these views, that the Church of England, as a supernatural Body, is at the present time without a voice. If only the Body could fashion for itself a satisfactory *mouth*, in the shape of a correct synod, this very grave defect would be remedied. Then the Church might speak for itself and judge for itself and declare its own mind with authority. The voice of the Church, like itself, would be supernatural.

There are many obvious difficulties besetting any view like this, against which the holders of it can only arm themselves for the most part with what seems to them to be faith. We ask, supposing that there is this distinction between the Church and the World, that the one is supernatural and the other natural, how are we, living at this day, to know the Church ? Perhaps some answer like this may be given,—“ Any organized society which has the Apostolical Succession, and the Threefold Ministry, and the Sacraments, and the

Creeds, may rightly claim to be a part of the Supernatural Body, with the power of dispensing the supernatural gifts and graces." Are we obliged to hold then that South American Romanism, for example, is supernatural, and the Methodist Society merely natural? Or, looking on each side of us at home, are we to say that we of the Church of England enjoy supernatural gifts and grace, and that Non-Churchmen have to do as well as they can without them? And the State,—is that a mere natural creation? We should be led on to ask what those who use these terms natural and supernatural mean by them. When they call men and things outside the Church natural, do they mean that they are without God? Impossible. They are compelled to be indefinite, to empty the words of an intelligible meaning. But none the less do they revert to their original position, and conjure with the word supernatural as if it meant all that it appears to mean, and affirm the Church of England as distinguished from the civil society to be the Body of Christ, and therefore entitled by Divine right to spiritual independence. To this policy they pledge their loyalty to Christ. They think they would be denying Christ, if they did not claim Divine prerogative as given to his Body.

But is not then the Church the Body of Christ? Is there not some society upon earth which Christ founded to be permanent, and to the officers and members of which he assigned certain powers and graces in perpetuity?

Let us see what the Church was, when St. Paul declared it to be Christ's Body.

No doubt it was from the first a society of persons called out from the world. It was formed by the Apostles, who proclaimed Jesus Christ as a Living Lord and Saviour, and invited men to receive forgiveness of sins through him. Those who were persuaded to do so were baptized with water and joined to the existing company of believers. The Holy Ghost, as a power of warmth and light and utterance, was given to the society at its beginning, and it was assumed that every one who came into the society drank of the same Spirit. Besides the Baptism at the entrance into the Church, there was one other ordinance used by the society, the common partaking of bread and wine, as of the Body and Blood of the Saviour, on the Resurrection Day.

The government of the society was in the hands of the Apostles. There was no distinction at first between the more secular and the more strictly spiritual provinces of the common life of the Church. But, as the need arose, officers called deacons or ministers were appointed to relieve the Apostles of such work as the distribution of funds amongst the needy. After a time, the Church spread through the preaching of Christ beyond Jerusalem and Judæa. St. Paul, when his Apostolic career had begun, went from city to city, founding small branch societies wherever his word was received. Each of these societies was called a Church, and it was assumed that every one who joined them became a partaker of

the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of Jesus Christ, whose power was manifested in the fervour and faith of the Christian body. All St. Paul's Churches remained under his personal government, and every dispute and question that arose in them was referred to him. But he appointed elders or overseers in every city, to exercise pastoral care over the believers ; and no doubt there were deacons also, as a rule, in every Christian community.

St. Paul delighted to contemplate the organic unity of this association of believers in Christ. The idea of it excited his enthusiasm ; he dwells upon it, blesses God for creating it, exhorts the individual believer to appreciate it, to use its privileges and to conform himself and his life to it. You remember the passage in which this feeling finds its most remarkable utterance. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye were called in one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all." With this unity, there are distinctions of function ; and each member, St. Paul holds, has his own gift of endowment to enable him to fill his own place. Christ is the great Giver, and besides these gifts to the several members of the body, he gave to the body as a whole the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, by whose various ministries sinful and self-willed men were to be moulded into true members and the ultimate perfecting of the body to be accomplished. St. Paul looked forward in hope to the time when the Body of Christ might be not only ideally

perfect, but actually perfect also, in its adult growth and in the harmonious co-operation of all its parts.

Surely, it may be said, this is a supernatural creation of which St. Paul speaks. It cannot be doubted that the Apostle held the Church of his own days to be in close relations with the living Christ in heaven, and to have precious gifts and privileges. True, that cannot be doubted. But St. Paul appears to me to be in a completely different atmosphere of thought from that in which the ecclesiastical organization is exalted infinitely above the civil, or a Church organized in one way set infinitely above a Church organized in another way.

If we supposed that St. Paul was attributing a Divine authority to a particular organization, we should have to conclude that the hierarchy of the Church ought to consist, not of bishops, priests, and deacons, but of apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. No doubt, in naming these agents of Christ in the building of the body, St. Paul was not thinking of a Divinely-appointed permanent organization of the Church. But if Christians from the first age have been right in believing that St. Paul was not imposing *these* orders upon the Church, at all events he does *not* name the orders of bishops, priests and deacons. The Church had not yet received the full organization which it afterwards acquired. The Apostles held an exceptional position in the Church, and the place of St. Paul was still more unique. His government was a personal one, exercised by him because he was the actual father of

his Churches. In the Churches under his government, the two names, bishop (overseer), and presbyter (elder), were given to the same persons. It was only by degrees, after the Apostles were gone, that the name of bishop was appropriated to the presbyter who was appointed to preside over other presbyters. Nothing can be clearer, I think, than that St. Paul's faith in the Divine calling and constitution of the Church does not attach itself to any defined organization. We see in the New Testament the administrative system of the Church *growing* under our eyes according to its circumstances and its needs. Christ gave whatever sort of agents were wanted for the building up of the body.

Observe, in the next place, that it is not in the outward realized shape of the Church, that St. Paul sees the Divine creation which he glorifies. There may be every sort of defect and irregularity in the men and women whom Christ has called to be his members. The unity is not made by them, and does not depend upon them. Their business is to *keep* the unity, to conform themselves to it. The supernatural Body of Christ is the *ideal* one, and it is realized with various degrees of imperfection wherever men acknowledge Christ as their head.

The truth is, that the Church of Christ is *more* supernatural in the New Testament than it is to those who are now warning off the civil society from presuming to interfere in its domain. We Christians of the Church of England are a part of the Body of Christ, in that God has called us to be in fellowship

with his Son and has given us to drink of his filial Spirit ; and we are a part of the Body of Christ, again, in so far as we on our side yield ourselves to be God's children and submit to the motions of his Spirit. The institutions of the Church are means, more or less sacred and important, for bringing us all into our right spiritual places and conditions. This is the Scriptural account of the Church. In order to take it in, we must think first and steadily of what the perfect spiritual society of Christ's members would be, in earth and heaven ; and then we must see in the various processes, ecclesiastical and other, by which that perfection is promoted, God's gifts or energies accomplishing the unity which is his aim.

What guidance may we get, then, from the New Testament with reference to the ecclesiastical difficulties of our time ?

We find nothing whatever, I think, in the New Testament, to tell us directly what the relations between the Church and non-Churchmen, between the Church and the State, ought to be in circumstances such as ours. The Apostles were occupied with the conditions in the midst of which they lived. They were not speculators, but Apostles. They did not draw up rules for a world altogether different from that in which they were working. There was nothing in their day at all answering to the condition of our Christian England ; nothing analogous to our Church and Dissent, nothing analogous to our Church and State, in the relations of the small Christian com-

munities of the first age to the heathen and Jewish world around them.

But it does not therefore follow that the teaching of the Apostles will give us no help in dealing practically with the problems of our own age. We may study their principles, and seek to enter into their spirit.

(1.) They teach us to keep in view the ideal perfection of the Body of Christ. Not St. Paul only, but all the Apostles and Evangelists, were continually contemplating the heavenly glory of a brotherhood of men in full harmony with each other because all joined to Christ, of men walking in humility and meekness and love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is nothing in such an ideal less suited to us to-day than to the Christians of the first age. For ourselves, and for our neighbours and fellow-men, this hope should be in our hearts, this Divine ideal before our eyes. Let us believe that it is the Divine purpose, and that we are called to the fulfilment of it.

(2.) They teach us, further, to subordinate means to the end. Is it not an express principle in the teaching of our Lord Himself and of his Apostles, that means and instruments and agencies are not to be worshipped in themselves but to be estimated with reference to the end they are to promote? Think, for example, what is implied in that pregnant saying, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Means and instruments are not dishonoured by this principle. If the end they serve

is high and precious, they also will deserve to be valued. If the spiritual freedom of man is important, then the ordinance of a Day of Rest, which ministers to it, may well be sacred. But it is often appointed in the Providence of God that an apparent dishonour should be cast on means, that the minds of men may be forced away from resting upon them. And means may be varied, according to circumstances, whilst the same permanent end is to be sought. Now the orders of a sacred ministry, and a historical succession of Bishops, and an ancient Church, and consecrated buildings, can claim to be nothing better than means for the building up of the body of Christ. It is right to prize them, but it is equally right to regard them steadily as subordinate to their end. And we might expect that God would make it plain to us by fact and history that the end is higher than the means and independent of them.

(3.) They teach us again, to strive to be spiritual rather than ecclesiastical. By the ecclesiastical disposition, I mean that which makes much of the dignities and rights of a Church. In the New Testament, this disposition appears to be illustrated in the character of the Jews and the Judaizing Christians. They were always thinking of their exclusive religious privileges, of the sacredness of the Temple and of the Law, and of the questionable and dangerous position of those who were outside the covenant. Now this habit of mind, undoubtedly religious as it was, is not held up to our admiration in the New Testament, but the contrary. It is denounced as being the

opposite of a true spirituality. It is shown to us as associated with intolerance, bigotry, hardness, cruelty, as most offensive to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and fruitful of mischief in the world. St. Paul had to undergo the reproach of being disloyal to the religion of his fathers, because he contended against this ecclesiastical spirit. But the reproach was as unjust as it was painful to him. He loved the holy city and the Temple and the ordinances of the Law and his kindred according to the flesh ; but he knew that the proper aim of a devout man was not to hedge round an organization, but to glorify and bear witness to the Divine Spirit.

(4.) Again, the Apostles teach us to regard civil society as a Divine creation, and civil authority as having a Divine sanction. It is extremely impressive to remember that when St. Paul wrote, "The powers that be are ordained of God," the highest earthly potentate was the Emperor Nero—not only a Pagan, but one of the most odious and contemptible of men. What would he, who treated the Roman administration with such respect, have thought of the civil authority of a Christian country like ours ? With what aversion would he have turned away from the language which calls it merely "natural," and seeks to foster an irreverent and defiant spirit towards it !

(5.) And lastly, let me remind you with what earnestness the New Testament urges us all to seek to be governed by the gracious and considerate Spirit of Jesus Christ. Wherever there is good, in whatever Samaritan or heathen we may see kindness and the

fear of God, there we are to welcome it and rejoice in it in our Father's name. There is no respect of persons with God, no acceptance of any man on account of his religion or his profession; under whatever religious garb, he that loveth is born of God, he that doeth righteousness is born of God. There is no danger in being ready to appreciate simple goodness and to refer it to the working of the Divine Spirit wherever we may find it; there is the greatest danger in failing to appreciate it. This is doctrine of unquestionable Divine authority, which we may often have opportunities of putting into practice. Let us remember to cherish it in all our dealings with those who do not belong to our own Church. Let us be afraid lest nature and the flesh should make us intolerant and unsympathetic; let us be sure that Christ and the Spirit would win us to modesty and reverence and sympathy.

I do not deprecate attachment to the Church of our fathers. God forbid. How can we be thankful enough for the privileges of which by God's mercy we are inheritors? But let us learn to set Christ above the Church. Then we shall not, I think, love our Church the less; but we shall love it more wisely, and be more able, perhaps, to draw others into the fellowship of our love.

THE END.

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